

THE
SEWANEE REVIEW

Volume 51

1943

Reprinted with the permission of the University of the South

KRAUS REPRINT CORPORATION

New York, N.Y.

1965

I

Printed in the United States of America

II

Sewanee Review

[Founded 1892]

A Quarterly of Life and Letters

VOLUME LI

1943



PUBLISHED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH
SEWANEE, TENNESSEE

PRINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESS OF SEWANEE, TENNESSEE

CONTRIBUTORS TO VOLUME LI

1943

CONTENTS

ARTICLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Adams, Henry (see <i>The Novels of Henry Adams</i>)	<i>R. P. Blackmur</i>	281
Advance Guard, The	<i>Charles Allen</i>	410
Artist and Patria	<i>Robert B. Heilman</i>	382
Case of Miss Arabella Fermor, The	<i>Cleanth Brooks</i>	505
Christabel	<i>Roy P. Basler</i>	73
Church and the University Today, The	<i>John Wild</i>	1
Conversations With Paul Elmer More	<i>J. Duncan Spaeth</i>	532
Dickens's Dark Novels, 1851-1857	<i>Lionel Stevenson</i>	398
Dostoevsky's Hovering Fly	<i>Allen Tate</i>	353
Du Bois, William Porcher (see <i>From Aristotle to Christ</i>)	<i>John S. Marshall</i>	148
Emily Dickinson's Poetry: A Revaluation	<i>Eunice Glenn</i>	574
Experiment and Achievement	<i>Harry M. Campbell</i>	305
Fall of the City, The	<i>Randall Jarrell</i>	267
Faulkner, William (see <i>Experiment and Achievement</i>)	<i>Harry M. Campbell</i>	305
From Aristotle to Christ	<i>John S. Marshall</i>	148
Inversion of Culture, and the World Revolution, The	<i>John Wild</i>	449
Jackson, George Pullen (see <i>White Spirituals and Their Historian</i>)	<i>Donald Davidson</i>	589
Kazin, Alfred (see <i>Mr. Kazin's America</i>)	<i>Cleanth Brooks</i>	52
MacLeish, Archibald (see <i>Fall of the City</i>)	<i>Randall Jarrell</i>	267
MacNeice, Louis (see <i>Some Poems of Louis MacNeice</i>)	<i>Stuart Gerry Brown</i>	62
Magazines (see <i>The Advance Guard</i>)	<i>Charles Allen</i>	410
Marcel Proust	<i>Harry Stochower</i>	370
Memorandum to the Leader	<i>Duncan Kenner Brent</i>	121
Milton, John (see <i>The Rôle of Milton's Christ</i>)	<i>Don M. Wolfe</i>	467
Mr. Kazin's America	<i>Cleanth Brooks</i>	52
More, Paul Elmer (see <i>Conversations With Paul Elmer More</i>)	<i>J. Duncan Spaeth</i>	532
Naturally Immortal	<i>Medford Evans</i>	131
Novels of Henry Adams, The	<i>R. P. Blackmur</i>	281
Older Religiousness in the South, The	<i>R. M. Weaver</i>	237
Proust, Marcel (see <i>Marcel Proust</i>)	<i>Harry Stochower</i>	370
Religion in the South (see <i>The Older Religiousness in the South</i>)	<i>R. M. Weaver</i>	237
Rôle of Milton's Christ, The	<i>Don M. Wolfe</i>	467
Russell, Bertrand (see <i>Naturally, Immortal</i>)	<i>Medford Evans</i>	131
Some Notes on the Nature of English Poetry	<i>Arthur Mizener</i>	27
Some Poems of Louis MacNeice	<i>Stuart Gerry Brown</i>	62
Spirituals (see <i>White Spirituals and Their Historian</i>)	<i>Donald Davidson</i>	589
Tension and Structure of Poetry	<i>William Van O'Connor</i>	555
Virginia Woolf on the Novel	<i>Solomon Fishman</i>	321
War and the Liberal Arts Education	<i>Alexander Guerry</i>	96
What Gulliver Knew	<i>Joe Horrell</i>	476
White Spirituals and Their Historian	<i>Donald Davidson</i>	589
Woolf, Virginia (see <i>Virginia Woolf on the Novel</i>)	<i>Solomon Fishman</i>	321

ESSAYISTS

AUTHOR	PAGE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Allen, Charles	410	Heilman, Robert B.	382
Basler, Roy P.	73	Horrell, Joe	476
Blackmur, R. P.	281	Jarrell, Randall	267
Brent, Duncan Kenner	121	Marshall, John S.	148
Brooks, Cleanth	52, 505	Mizerer, Arthur	27
Brown, Stuart Gerry	62	O'Connor, William Van	555
Campbell, Harry M.	305	Slochower, Harry	370
Davidson, Donald	589	Spaeth, J. Duncan	532
Evans, Medford	131	Stevenson, Lionel	398
Fishman, Solomon	321	Tate, Allen	353
Glenn, Eanice	574	Weaver, R. M.	237
Guerry, Alexander	96	Wild, John	1, 449
		Wolfe, Don M.	467

POEMS

Airmen's Virtue	21	<i>William Meredith</i>	21
Ancestor	397	<i>John Berryman</i>	397
Another Armistice	254	<i>Thomas Haile</i>	254
A Quarrel: Aquarelle	23	<i>Carlos Baker</i>	23
Carnival, The	266	<i>Nancy Shankland</i>	266
Come Close to Me	530	<i>Chad Walsh</i>	530
Confessional	264	<i>John Edward Hardy</i>	264
Cycles of the Soul, The	528	<i>Joseph Bennett</i>	528
Dea Roma	391	<i>Robert Lowell</i>	391
Death From Cancer on Easter	392	<i>Robert Lowell</i>	392
Dutch Graves in Bucks County	14	<i>Wallace Stevens</i>	14
East Wind	24	<i>Louis O. Coxe</i>	24
Egypt's Queen	527	<i>Joseph Bennett</i>	527
Emperor's View	259	<i>S. T. Clark</i>	259
Exterior of a Taciturn Grandparent	529	<i>Eleanor Glenn Wallis</i>	529
Farewell to Miles	396	<i>John Berryman</i>	396
First Light	23	<i>Carlos Baker</i>	23
For Carter Morgan	251	<i>William Arrowsmith</i>	251
For the Christmas Breakfast	250	<i>William Arrowsmith</i>	250
Fragment of Endless Meditation	22	<i>Arthur Mizener</i>	22
In the Cage	531	<i>Carlos Baker</i>	531
January Feast	525	<i>Joseph Bennett</i>	525
Laboratory, The	253	<i>Randall Jarrell</i>	253
Leviathan	390	<i>Robert Lowell</i>	390
Magnolia is a Hardy Tree, The	255	<i>Thomas Haile</i>	255
Mike, Trim and the Queen Walk Home and Say Goodby	262	<i>S. T. Clark</i>	262
Monologue	250	<i>William Arrowsmith</i>	250
Navy Field	20	<i>William Meredith</i>	20
November Ghosts, The	252	<i>Randall Jarrell</i>	252
On Seeing the Statue of Jefferson Davis Before the Capitol,		<i>George Marion O'Donnell</i>	19
Montgomery, Alabama		<i>George Marion O'Donnell</i>	19
On the Eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception,		<i>Robert Lowell</i>	393
1942		<i>George Marion O'Donnell</i>	18
Plain Statement	18	<i>Louis O. Coxe</i>	25
Portrait of New England		<i>Robert Lowell</i>	395
Prayer for the Jews		<i>George Marion O'Donnell</i>	17
Savage Province		<i>John Edward Hardy</i>	265
Scholar Poet, The			

Contents

v

ARTICLE

	AUTHOR	PAGE
Therapeutic Wood, The.....	Thomas Haile	258
Trim Gets Mike Out of Jail and They Go on a Bender.....	S. T. Clark	261
Trim Walking With His Wife Sees Mike at a Jail Window.....	S. T. Clark	260
Troy	Joseph Bennett	526

POETS

AUTHOR	PAGE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Arrowsmith, William.....	250, 251	Lowell, Robert	390, 391, 392, 393, 395
Baker, Carlos	23, 531	Meredith, William	20, 21
Bennett, Joseph	525, 526, 527, 528	Mizener, Arthur	22
Berryman, John	396, 397	O'Donnell, George Marion	17, 18, 19
Clark, S. T.	259, 260, 261, 262	Shankland, Nancy	266
Coxe, Louis O.	24, 25	Stevens, Wallace	14
Haile, Thomas	254, 255, 258	Wallis, Eleanor Glenn	529
Hardy, John Edward	264, 265	Walsh, Chad	530
Jarrell, Randall	252, 253		

BOOK REVIEWS**ARTICLE**

	AUTHOR	PAGE
American Harvest: Twenty Years of Creative Writing in the United States edited by Allen Tate and John Peale Bishop (<i>Carlos Baker</i>)	160	
The Anatomy of Nonsense, by Yvor Winters (<i>Robert Daniel</i>)	602	
At Heaven's Gate, by Robert Penn Warren (<i>Andrew Lytle</i>)	599	
Brownstone Eclogues, by Conrad Aiken (<i>George Scarbrough</i>)	442	
Four Quartets, by T. S. Eliot (<i>Robert Lowell</i>)	432	
The Hero in History, by Sidney Hook (<i>Monroe C. Beardsley</i>)	606	
Lee's Lieutenants, by Douglas Southall Freeman (<i>Andrew Lytle</i>)	177	
The Legacy of Nazism, by Frank Munk (<i>Eugene M. Kayden</i>)	611	
The Machiavellians, by James Burnham (<i>Monroe C. Beardsley</i>)	606	
Mémoires by André Maurois (<i>Stratton Buck</i>)	430	
Men at War: The best War Stories of All Time, edited by Ernest Hemingway (<i>Carlos Baker</i>)	160	
Morgan and His Raiders, by Cecil Fletcher Holland (<i>Laura Krey</i>)	175	
One World, by Wendell L. Willkie (<i>William Howard MacKellar</i>)	439	
Primer for Combat, by Kay Boyle (<i>Gertrude Buckman</i>)	341	
Reflections on the Revolution of our Time, by Harold J. Laski (<i>Eugene M. Kayden</i>)	611	
The Rights of Man and Natural Law, by Jacques Maritain (<i>Eugene M. Kayden</i>)	611	
River Rogue, by Brainard Cheney (<i>Donald Davidson</i>)	163	
The Seventh Cross, by Ann Seghers (<i>Gertrude Buckman</i>)	341	
Shakespeare and the Nature of Man, by Theodore Spencer (<i>Medford Evans</i>)	435	
A Time For Greatness, by Herbert Agar (<i>Eugene M. Kayden</i>)	173	
Victory Through Air Power, by Major Alexander P. De Seversky (<i>Edward McCrady, Jr.</i>)	167	
We Cannot Escape History, by John T. Whitaker (<i>Abbott Martin</i>)	345	

REVIEWERS

AUTHOR	PAGE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Baker, Carlos	160	Kayden, Eugene M.	173, 611
Beardsley, Monroe C.	606	Krey, Laura	175
Buck, Stratton	430	Lowell, Robert	432
Buckman, Gertrude	341	Lytle, Andrew	177, 599
Daniel, Robert	602	McCrady, Edward, Jr.	167
Davidson, Donald	163	MacKellar, William Howard	439
Evans, Medford	435	Martin, Abbott	345
		Scarborough, George	442

FICTION

ARTICLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Aunt Julia: A Story	Janet Mayhall	546
Enchanted Bull, The	LeRoy Leatherman	102
Statement of Ashby Wyndham	Robert Penn Warren	183

FICTION WRITERS

AUTHOR	PAGE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Leatherman, LeRoy	102	Mayhall, Janet	546
		Warren, Robert Penn	183

by John Wild

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY TODAY

IT has been said that the history of our western culture up to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries consisted of putting more and more things under God, while the history of our culture since then has consisted in taking them away. In the case of many agencies and institutions so strong was the connecting link that the separation had to be achieved by force with considerable stress and strain. Thus the State had to be separated from the Church in a long struggle, involving the violence of revolution, which has endured up to our present day, when the final result of the separation is now so tragically manifest.

In the case of other institutions, however, the two have simply grown apart by slow and almost imperceptible stages. Thus the older endowed universities of our country, first founded under religious auspices, after a few early spasmodic struggles have on the whole drifted off peacefully into that stage of somnolent secularism we now call the liberal tradition. The very tacit acceptance of this divorce as a sort of healthy budding process by both sides, and the very gradualness with which it has taken place have tended to make it seem natural and to conceal its true significance. Until very recently, a sort of nominal lip service to "Christianity" and to "Christian culture" has been universally confused with genuine Christian education, and the Church herself has often seemed only half reluctantly to bless the tide of secular rebellion.

Things have now gone so far however, that no one cognizant of the facts can any longer pretend that there is any real trace in our older endowed colleges of that religious orientation origi-

nally intended by their founders. The younger state-supported institutions are, of course, atheistic by law. The privately supported institutions are now atheistic in fact. This is the sole difference between them.

For a long time after living Christianity had lost its grip upon the schools, certain traces of its past domination were maintained, in the educational order we now know as the Classical tradition. Greek and Latin, the languages par excellence of Christian philosophy and theology were still studied as a formal discipline but not for the sake of their content. This content was defended either on traditional grounds as part of our cultural heritage, or on the basis of the new humanistic or subjectivist philosophy of the Renaissance. The idealistic philosophy soon falling into chaos and confusion, was utterly incapable of providing a stable basis for assimilating the vast complex of facts and data constantly accumulated by the expanding natural sciences.

Hence it is not surprising that this tradition also has now been completely undermined, and the colleges and universities of the country left under that unguiding guidance so widely advertised as liberalism. Thus the colleges first established, in the words of the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 for "the honor of God, the advantage of the Christian religion and the great benefit of this and the other United States of America," do not now even represent a tradition, but a bedlam of confusion, concerning which one and only one apology can be made, namely that it has not yet sunk under the sway of such foul tyranny as has elsewhere inevitably succeeded it. That the university has now cut itself loose from all connection with the religious aim of its founders is frankly admitted by honest administrators themselves. Thus President Conant of Harvard, in his *Annual Report* to the Overseers of 1934 said,

Our Puritan ancestors thought of education and theology as inseparably connected. It is hard for us to recapture their point of view. . . .

If we ask, "What then has taken the place of the religious aims

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 3

of the Puritans, what is the present-day university for, what orders its myriad faculties and disciplines into one, in what sense is the university a university rather than an accidental diversity?" we are given only evasive and sophistic answers. The university is the home of knowledge, we may be told, and all knowledge finds a place under its most hospitable roof, thence to be disseminated to the coming generations. But what is meant by knowledge? Do we include everything that anyone has ever thought or held or supposed to be knowledge? If so, the waters of Babylon are a pool of serenity compared to the confusion under its roof, and parents may be well excused a certain hesitancy in exposing their children to this windy vortex, or at least in wondering whether it is worth the price.

Or we may be given a "pragmatic" answer. Not *all* opinions can be represented of course. Pandora's box would burst at this! No, the modern university is the treasure house only of those guesses and hypotheses which have in the past proved *useful* to man in carrying on his manifold cultural and vital endeavors. But this again is an evasion rather than an answer. Useful to whom and for what? To a tyrant in subduing a mass of prospective slaves, to a careerist seeking an easy job? Again do we mean what is really useful or only what has seemed useful to someone? If the latter, we have once more opened Pandora's box. If the former, we may then ask for an answer, a *real* answer to our question. What knowledge is truly useful, and therefore to be sought and transmitted by a university? Knowledge of medicine is useful for certain purposes, as is knowledge of gas heating, plumbing, and cooking for others. But we may surely question whether all of this is useful for the education of the soul of a man. We may thus pursue the discussion. But we shall gain no answer.

The faculty of the university itself is divided, so far as it has any convictions at all. When questions of educational policy arise there is either silence or a Babel of conflicting voices. The result is that utter chaos of the elective system, in which anything and everything is possible, and the different faculties and departments are left free to fight it out among themselves, each using

its own advertising technique in the scramble after students, gas-heating being given no particular advantage over philosophy, nor philosophy over home economics. This is now called a university.

It is true that the important is mixed with the trivial in this witch's cauldron, the sublime with the ridiculous. The student who is willing to make the effort can get a real education in the modern university. The great classics are still taught off in a corner, as well as the means of intelligently studying them, but no one is there to point the way. He may even find courses where sacred things are mentioned, and where the religious foundations of our western culture are presented by learned antiquarians as museum pieces, carefully analyzed and compared with Buddhism, Mohammedanism and other obscure manifestations of man the irrational animal. Here and there, often in the most unexpected places, he may find a scholar and a teacher with a conscience, who has at least struggled to find some order in the chaos, and actually attempts to defend some significant generalization, or even a broad philosophic truth in the class room.

If so, confronted by such an out of the way phenomenon the student will either share the antagonism of his fellows in resenting such "dogmatism," or he may begin to experience the meaning of an education. But this is hardly likely. Far more probably he will follow a quixotic interest, dabbling in some esoteric hobby, like the youth who emerged from college with nineteen credits in Indic Philology, or he will concentrate in some subject which can be construed as of practical importance, like the famous case of the student who emerged from Harvard with eleven courses in money and banking, or like most of his fellows he will follow the easier course, picking up a rudimentary acquaintance with various matters, aiming at that thin glaze of cultural volubility on many topics, which was long considered a social asset. At present this type of careerism is on the wane since the present economic system offers less dazzling prospects than formerly to the fluent after-dinner speaker. So the more specialized type of careerism is more prevalent.

The liberal education of something like fifty per cent of our

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 5

university undergraduates before the war aimed definitely at the professions of law, medicine, and government. Perhaps the colleges may survive after all, as pre-professional schools, teaching that modicum of culture, history, *et cetera*, which may be judged fitting for a successful doctor or lawyer. In any case we have careerism. The university today is committed to no program capable of touching the soul of the student. It does not even know that the student has a soul. It dismisses him exactly as it receives him, essentially the same, presenting him with a certificate certifying that he is equipped to engage in a higher profession or at least that he has remembered enough names and dates, and has enough fluency to pass the general examinations. The student's basic purposes have been left untouched, his basic understanding of himself and the world uncriticized. He has picked these up here and there à la mode. How can the university teach anything about the end when it has no end of its own? It is simply fighting for survival amidst the welter of other fragments which may sometime be reorganized again into a meaningful civilization.

These tragic results which are now so manifest should lead us to reflect on the original separation of education from religion which lies at their root. We have come to think of this as a healthy natural tendency, engrained in education, at least after it comes of age. But it is a relatively recent phenomenon. It has increasingly prevailed in the last three hundred years of our cultural history, but this is only a brief phase of our cultural history as a whole. If we are to judge the true nature of higher education we must examine it in its first roots, and in its stable maturity rather than in a period of chaotic decline. Let us think for a moment of the first great school of higher learning, the first university, Plato's Academy, founded in ancient Greece in 386 B.C.

This prototype of all academies was founded four centuries before the advent of Christianity. Nevertheless the religious character of the first great western university is clearly marked. Legally it was a religious association or *thiasos* organized about

a shrine. Plato bought the shrine and the building himself to begin with, but henceforth to the time of Cicero the property was legally owned by a divine being. It is only in terms of this underlying religious purpose that Plato's attack on the "merchants of learning" and the wholly secular sophistic schools, supported by students' fees can be understood. The object of his attack is not the mere acceptance of fees. Teachers must of course be supported one way or another. The object of his attack is that such a school will in the end be forced to teach the sort of thing which men will be ready to pay for rather than the truth. Such technical and professional schools certainly have their place. But they cannot provide that "communion of *free education*"¹ which was the aim of the first European university, and remained the aim of the European universities until our recent times.

All through his account of higher education in the seventh Book of the *Republic*, Plato warns against the peril of yielding to those who seek only some practical advantage from science. The schools which yield to this temptation will produce not free men but a race of slaves, perhaps remarkably efficient instruments for carrying out the purposes arbitrarily set up by some tyrannical ruling group, but not free men. The only education capable of producing free men is one which is grounded on that which is intrinsically good, not good for anything else or anyone else but good in itself, and therefore the ultimate source of all derived utilities. The study of this is "the greatest study" and the only possible nursing ground of freedom.

Which is to rule our universities, that which is good without qualification, or the practical interests of the state? This is the issue we squarely face today. We cannot evade it much longer. Are we to teach a dazzling array of professional skills and techniques which will enable their possessors to satisfy the needs of some arbitrary system of values which they blindly accept, or are we to maintain the ancient idea of a free or liberal education and attempt the far more difficult task of teaching those founda-

¹Plato, *Epistle*, VII, 334 B.

²Plato, *The Republic*, 505 A.

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 7

tional disciplines which concern themselves not with what is true at this time or some other time, in this connection or in that, but with what is simply true, not with what is good for this or for that, but with what is simply good, which will enable their possessors to think for themselves not only on minor matters but on ultimate matters as well?

The connection between liberal education and religion is not an accidental matter of Church tyranny or the priestly will to power as the eighteenth century attempted to assure itself. Without religion there can be no *free* education removed from human caprice and tyranny. Furthermore this idea did not originate after the advent of Christianity, but hundreds of years before, with the great pagan teachers of Athens who founded our first free academies. Of course their knowledge of divine things was very limited, and for the most part entirely dependent on the insights open to natural reason; but it was sufficient to enable them to recognize the existence of something intrinsically good, an order or structure of being founded upon this, independent of any tyrannical opinion, and therefore to establish in the pre-Christian era a liberal education not merely for artisans, technicians, and professionals capable of ministering to the needs of others, but for free men capable of understanding the whole structure of means and ends, and hence of truly enjoying the goods provided by culture and society. With the advent of Christianity further theological knowledge was achieved, which, united with the philosophy discovered by the Greeks, enabled the Church to preserve a rich treasure of truth and a free education based upon truth alone, through the difficult period of Roman decline and the even more difficult chaos of the barbarian world.

The sacrifice made by the Church in maintaining schools and scholars was repaid by the labors of great scholars and teachers who clarified and enriched the dogmatic teaching of the Church, defended her against attack, and drew into the fold others, like Clement of Alexandria and St. Augustine, both of whom followed the rational pathway to Christianity, now so long obstructed and choked. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with the

recovery of political stability, these germs, carefully preserved and treasured by the Church, blossomed forth and bore rich fruit in the universalism of the University of Paris, a great super-national school with professors drawn from the whole civilized world, teaching not what was true for the Germans or true for the French, not what was useful for some technical enterprise decided upon by some alien source, but what was universally true for a rational man, and based upon something intrinsically good in itself. As we all know, this type of universal education was maintained until the great disruptive movements of the Renaissance. Even three hundred years of progressive disintegration has not been able to destroy the *idea*.

That is why, at the present time we are witnessing a strange and increasingly powerful fermentation in the now wholly secularized colleges and universities of the country. Here and there in scattered departments and scattered colleges pagan teachers are beginning to study the great Greek and medieval classics once more, not merely as museum pieces on which antiquarian research is to be performed for some traditional reason not altogether clear, but as precious storehouses of truth from which actual guiding insights may be elicited. Pagan college administrators are openly confessing the complete chaos and cultural bankruptcy of the programs they are forced to administer, and crying aloud in no uncertain terms for the restoration of a truly liberal education for free men, unless we are content to see the best of our youth benumbed in reason, rendered indifferent to everything truly important, and reduced to the condition of potential slaves by continued exposure to the chaos of our colleges. At least one new pagan college under thoroughly pagan auspices has been established which is uncompromisingly committed to the aim of realizing once again the ancient aim of a liberal education for free men, rather than for gentlemen or technicians.

What rôle then, we may well ask, is the Church playing in this vital struggle, to recapture the treasure which she herself fostered and guarded through so many centuries of decadence and bar-

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 9

barism? Surely if she herself did not instigate this rebellion, she is supporting it. Surely if not supporting it she is at least interested in it. Surely if not interested in the pagan schools whose monotonous decline has certainly merited disinterestedness, she is interested in her own schools, jealously preserving at least in them her great heritage of classical philosophy and theology. What of the Church? What is she doing about education?

The answer is unfortunately not clear. The Church has not instigated the present rebellion against the tyranny of liberalism in the colleges. It has been instigated by exclusively pagan sources, performing this peculiarly Christian task from exclusively pagan motives of loyalty to truth and hatred of slavery. In addition to this, the Church has betrayed very little interest in secular philosophy and secular learning in general, except in the form of a general approval of the whole enterprize, so long as it avoided overt and militant atheism. It has allowed its own dogmatic and intellectual position to fall into such vagueness as to be apparently reconcilable with almost any philosophic position which did not go out of its way in attacking the *de facto* organization of the Church. Hence it has become impossible to distinguish between the true friends and the true enemies of Christianity in the fields of secular learning; and the phenomenon of Christian scholarship, orienting the truth of secular learning to the truth of revelation and vice versa, even if present, has been rendered invisible.

It is as if the Church has said: "You leave me alone and I will leave you alone; you can all consider yourselves to be Christians as long as you do not openly make trouble." This timid policy of the Concordat, while it may have been to the immediate temporal advantage of the Church in avoiding overt conflict, also now seems to make it impossible for her to take any stand on educational issues which are of the most vital concern to her as well as to humanity. Is this hands-off policy to be continued, or has the Church anything to say about education? To answer this question we must see what policy she has adopted in her own schools and seminaries.

Here the facts are even more disconcerting. For the past one hundred years, in the various colleges and academies under her direct control, the Church has been quite content to let things run their course. Far from trying to restore in clean-cut outline the ancient disciplines of a liberal education, based on the solid foundations of classical philosophy and firmly oriented towards the faith, she has rather yielded to the elective system, and to all the other disintegrating tendencies of that same liberalism which have finally removed all traces of their original religious structure from the now purely secular seats of learning. Religious requirements for teachers have been more and more diluted and even abandoned, and the Church has apparently taken such pride in the liberalism of her colleges that the candid observer now notes no difference between her schools and the others except perhaps the presence of a magnificent Chapel building and a superficial coating of pious verbiage. Of recent years this has become so obvious that even the pretense of Church control has been abandoned, and several so-called Church schools restored to unmitigated secular servitude.

This appallingly pragmatic indifference of the Church to intellectual matters is evidenced at this moment by the precarious status of the theological schools, many smaller ones actually facing the prospect of rapid extinction,—and this at a time when the dire need for theological instruction and true theological scholarship is recognized even in purely pagan circles. The situation in England is far from perfect, but it shines in contrast, for the Deaneries of Cathedrals there are scholarly posts, to some extent freed from parish burdens, and reserved for the exercise of scholarly and intellectual duties. Also each Diocese has its own theological seminary, often small and physically unimpressive, it is true, but nevertheless providing needed instruction, and offering opportunities for Christian scholarship. In this country, on the other hand, Bishops and Dioceses seem interested in nothing but the maintenance of the parish routine, without regard to its dogmatic and intellectual foundations. How long can these foundations be ignored?

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 11

This neglect of the intellectual will never be corrected until we can become aware of its doctrinal sources, for like every other aspect of human procedure, whether normal or abnormal, whether secular or ecclesiastical, it has its roots in some act of understanding or of misunderstanding. There are two doctrinal tendencies which I think are largely responsible for the situation to which I have tried to call the reader's attention. Without being able to develop them fully I shall at least enumerate them. They cut across all lines of Churchmanship, and constitute I believe the ultimate major source from which the strange indifference of the Church to education is to be traced.

First, there is the general mistrust of philosophic reason which led many of the late, decadent scholastics and most of the modern scholastics to teach philosophy dogmatically, *ex cathedra*, as though it were revelation, and which led many of the great Protestant reformers, like Luther, and in our time Karl Barth, to try to dispense with philosophy altogether, and to replace it by a *pure* theology. This is the reason for that segregation of theological faculties into separate schools and seminaries completely insulated from all living contact with other branches of learning, which has had such a fatal effect not only upon these other branches but upon theology herself, for pure theology cannot enter the human world without entering through the mind of some man, and hence without philosophical presuppositions.

In the second place, there is the inevitable corollary of irrationalism, subjectivism. All the other human faculties are relative or self-centered. Sensation, for example, does not so much present us with the independent nature of things as they are, as with the subjective appearance of things from a certain position or point of view. Reason alone is capable of apprehending the whole independent order of existence as it is. Mistrust of reason, therefore, leads us to a mistrust of any stable reality independent of our human interests, feelings, values, and in general of our human point of view, in other words to a humanistic or man-centered philosophy. When developed to its logical conclusion this is of course radically inconsistent with Christianity.

But philosophic tendencies are often not so developed to their bitter end, except by a few great philosophers. In the rest of us they are apt to remain as vague semi-conscious tendencies combined with others really quite opposed to them, with which they form a sort of mutually mitigating synthesis.

That is true of the subjectivism which mitigates so much of our modern Christianity, and dilutes so much of our own supposedly Christian thought. Thus we do not first simply and naively accept the articles of faith as the revelation concerning Himself of a being transcending our powers of apprehension, and then try to explain and assimilate them, but rather seek to explain them and make them palatable to ourselves before we really accept them. The result is that what we find ourselves finally able to accept is a diluted version of the Creed, symbolized and adapted in such a way as to fit in with what we believe already. Our sense of independent reality still remains, of course, but it is dimmed and merged with our own experience of it.

We spiritualize worship and religion until the independent supernatural factor fades off into the distance and what is left is some sort of restful or edifying experience. We even defend God not so much as the independent good, and the source of all goodness, but rather as something very good for us, and helpful to us in living our lives. It is not difficult to see the connection between this widespread religious subjectivism and the "practical" or subjective view of education. If there is no stable body of doctrine which must be learned for its own sake, then I may as well elect what I choose. Subjectivism leads finally to the widespread view of the Church not as a divine society devoting itself through the ages to the task of actually saving human nature and thus of redeeming the whole world, but rather as an instrument for extricating certain individuals from a hopeless conflagration, where all is really lost. This defeatism leads to a timid policy of the Concordat, and that sharp delimitation of the secular from the spiritual by an advancing line which leaves ever less space to the spiritual, until it is finally removed from every vital contact with the world of men.

THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSITY 13

Is the situation altogether hopeless? Can anything still be done? I think so. What then can the Church do, what can we do, in connection with the present crisis in education? For one thing, we might all of us try to steep ourselves so far as possible in St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and those other classics of Christian theology and philosophy, which belong to no particular school or sect, but belong to the universal heritage of all Christians, indeed to the universal heritage of humanity. Let us reassure ourselves that there are not only stable truths which are based upon faith, in spite of the diversity of creeds and religions, but also that there are stable truths based upon reason, in spite of the bewildering diversity of rival opinions and philosophies. Let us sharpen our sense of objective reality, of things as they really are, independent of all subjective interest or feeling, trying not only in our experience of worship and prayer, but in our experience in general, to discount the subjective factor in favor of the reality involved, rather than to discount the reality in favor of the experience and the effect upon ourselves.

If we can do this, the battle at least will have been begun. We may then be in a position to recognize more clearly the importance of theological schools where the truths of theology and philosophy are faithfully taught, and where classical insights are preserved, and intelligently applied to modern problems. If there is enough of a demand on the part of Christian parents to see that their children are given a Christian education, or rather an education, Church schools and colleges will be recaptured and re-established with a genuine disciplinary curriculum oriented to the truths of philosophy and to the faith. Finally the Church may see the importance of the great issues of education in general, and will become sensitive to shifts and trends of secular doctrine once more. She will see the enormous importance of those tiny Christian hostels and Houses of Study which have here and there sprung up in the vicinity of a few of our great universities, where she is even now exerting her healing influence on the vital life of the mind, and at least in a few important centers, reopening that rational pathway to religion, so choked and clogged in modern times.

by Wallace Stevens

DUTCH GRAVES IN BUCKS COUNTY

Angry men and furious machines
Swarm from the little blue of the horizon
To the great blue of the middle height.
Men scatter throughout clouds.
The wheels are too large for any noise.

And you, my semblables, in sooty residence
Tap skeleton drums inaudibly.

There are shouts and voices.
There are men shuffling on foot in air.
Men are moving and marching
And shuffling lightly, with the heavy lightness
Of those that are marching, many together.

And you, my semblables—the old flag of Holland
Flutters in tiny darkness.

There are circles of weapons in the sun.
The air attends the brightened guns,
As if sounds were forming
Out of themselves, a saying,
An expressive on-dit, a profession.

And you, my semblables, are doubly killed
To be buried in desert and deserted earth.

The flags are natures newly found.
Rifles grow sharper on the sight.
There is a rumble of autumnal marching,
From which no soft sleeve relieves us.
Fate is the present desperado.

And you, semblables, are crusts that lie
In the shrivellings of your time and place.

There is a battering of the drums. The bugles
Cry loudly, cry out in the powerful heart.
A force gathers that will cry louder
Than the most metal music, louder,
Like an instinctive incantation.

And you, my semblables, in the total
Of remembrance share nothing of ourselves.

An end must come in a merciless triumph,
An end of evil in a profounder logic,
In a peace that is more than a refuge,
In the will of what is common to all men,
Spelled from spent living and spent dying.

And you, my semblables, in gaffer-green,
Know that the past is not part of the present.

There were other soldiers, other people,
Men came as the sun comes, early children
And late wanderers creeping under the barb of night,
Year, year and year, defeated at last and lost
In an ignorance of sleep with nothing won.

And you, my semblables, know that this time
Is not an early time that has grown late.

But these are not those rusted armies.
There are the lewdest and the lustiest,
The hullabaloo of health and have,
The much too many disinherited
In a storm of torn-up testaments.

And you, my semblables, know that your children
Are not your children, not your selves.

Who are the mossy cronies muttering,
Monsters antique and haggard with past thought?
What is this crackling of voices in the mind,
This pitter-patter of archaic freedom,
Of the thousands of freedoms except our own?

And you, my semblables, whose ecstasy
Was the glory of heaven in the wilderness—

Freedom is like a man who kills himself
Each night, an incessant butcher, whose knife
Grows sharp in blood. The armies kill themselves,
And in their blood an ancient evil dies—
The action of incorrigible tragedy.

And you, my semblables, behold in blindness
That a new glory of new men assembles.

This is the pit of torment that placid end
Should be illusion, that the mobs of birth
Avoid our stale perfections, seeking out
Their own, waiting until we go
To picnic in the ruins that we leave.

So that the stars, my semblables, chimeres,
Shine on the very living of those alive.

These violent marchers of the present,
Rumbling along the autumnal horizon,
Under the arches, over the arches, in arcs
Of a chaos composed in more than order,
March toward a generation's centre.

Time was not wasted in your subtle temples.
No: nor divergence made too steep to follow down.

by George Marion O'Donnell

SAVAGE PROVINCE

The State—himself—was in complete order.
Detective senses brought in all the news;
Mind pondered it and sent to enforce his judgment
The Will's militia, kicking with spiked shoes.

Sometimes slight symptoms of revolt were seen,
But harmless recreation centers served
To minimize the tensions of the masses;
In general, strict conformity was observed.

And the work was done, the household garden kept;
The laws were respected, the ideals believed,
Constructive plans efficiently accomplished.
His foes admired the order he achieved.

Yet he feared they, like him, might some day notice—
Though censorship concealed the trouble's start—
The revolt that laughed at all his militia's torture:
Revolt in the savage province called the Heart.

by George Marion O'Donnell

PLAIN STATEMENT

Dear Sir, you say you do not understand
This poem's argument? It has a core
Illogical as a brain, a tongue, a hand.

The first term is the madness of our age;
The second term: some men are human still
And would sustain their human heritage.

The conclusion is: Logic is madness-fare
In an age when apparent men are logical beasts.
The logical violence sucks away sun and air;

In the airless dark the creatures who would be men
Now choose without decision's power, act
As the madness orders, or take the madness in.

There is one comfort, logicless as art:
One voice may speak, one human mind may speak;
Another mind may answer, its counterpart.

And though no logic can make this evident
(Therefore the argument, the myth, is faulty)
And though the voices are human, ignorant,

Yet two friends mind to mind and voice to voice
May scream through logical dark the logicless words:
"We are men, not beasts; like men, not beasts, rejoice."

by George Marion O'Donnell

ON SEEING THE STATUE OF JEFFERSON
DAVIS BEFORE THE CAPITOL,
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

Go at dusk to where
In bronze Jeff Davis broods;
Go when the winter dusk
Fits Jeff Davis' moods.

Look with him upon
A people who are doomed;
Feel in the bronze heart
Honor and guilt assumed

As Davis felt them both
The day they swore him in
And he looked down and saw
The land's defeat begin,

Seeing below him there—
Below that eminence—
Determined faces stare
In noble insolence.

by William Meredith

NAVY FIELD

Limped out of the hot sky a hurt plane,
Held off, held off, whirring pretty pigeon,
Hit then and scuttled to a crooked stop.
The stranger pilot who emerged—this was the seashore,
War came suddenly here—talked to the still mechanics
Who nodded gravely. Flak had done it, he said,
From an enemy ship attacked.

They wheeled it with love
Into the dark hangar's mouth and tended it.
Coffee and cake for the pilot men who sat alone
In the restaurant reading the numbered sheets
That tell about weather.

After, toward dusk,
Mended the stranger plane went back to the sky.
His curly-headed picture, and mother's and medal's pictures
Were all we knew of him after he rose again,
Those few electric jewels against the moth and shining sky.

by William Meredith

AIRMAN'S VIRTUE

High plane for whom the winds incline,
Who own but to your own recall,
There is a flaw in your design,
For you must fall.

High cloud whose proud and angry stuff
Rose up in heat against earth's thrall,
The nodding law has time enough
To wait your fall.

High sky, full of high shapes and vapors,
Against whose vault is no thing tall,
It is written that your torch and tapers
Headlong shall fall.

Only an outward-aching soul
Can hold in high disdain these ties,
And fixing on a farther pole,
Will sheerly rise.

by Arthur Mizener

FRAGMENT OF AN ENDLESS MEDITATION

And so one sits, hearing the high-pitched dignity
Of children at their game of life, watching
The leaves die in the Indian-summer sunshine
Once again. What do you make of this? What can
Anyone make of it? Here is life,
Wholly innocent; not simple or ignorant,
Not wanting deprivation, suffering, or pleasure,
Knowing these things, indeed, at their intensest.
But innocent; innocent as the child that loves
So well the garden mistress Mary grows,
The little pig and Jesus. And here is death,
Perennial, repetitious, almost random,
The incongruous and even beautiful dying,
The endless decimation of summer lives,
Now still as loneliness where they are heaped
In the autumn afternoon's unsteady sunshine:
All this may very well surprise the leaves
But is surely an old story to the trees.
One sees the bodies piled like this in the pictures,
And sometimes sees a vacant face or two,
The eyes staring, the mouth round and rigid
With the echo of a dying man's surprise.
These are merely a few of the countless millions
Of history, an old story, perennial, repetitious,
Almost random. What do you make of this?
What can anyone make of this?

by Carlos Baker

A QUARREL: AQUARELLE

Blind clumping out of doors to morning light,
Encased in the dark obloquy of words,
Struggling to block the passageway to spite,
He locked, instead, the door on sky and birds,

Until (one fist hard-slatting other palm)
Explosively he gave his anger air;
Then felt about him for the keys to calm.
As one, door-barred and drunken, wonders where,

He fumbled long, and longed to be inside,
Before he made the obdurate bolt give way,
Before at last he saw the door swing wide
And spread before his eyes the month of May.

FIRST LIGHT

Not now full-blooming glut of day:
But updawn of ubiquitous light
In which a universal gray
Inaudibly obscures the night,

While negatives to ear and eye
Develop their antitheses:
From silence, birdsongs multiply,
And black on lessening dark, the trees.

by Louis O. Coxe

EAST WIND

Tomorrow, rainfall. Over hills
Dusty with defunctive western light
The distance-smoothed holler of locomotive's lung
Wears down darkling miles.
As with sound at vacant dusk,
The mind, sensitive to changes
In the weather of desire,
Parches for images—
The desirable flume bursting where the heat pelts.

That I have come upon no miracle,
That I have found no rest,
Miracle or sign, that books are heavy
And chairs offer only comfortless angles—
Is this all? That I have come
Suddenly (in sleep, perhaps?) to a shaled footing
Where I can say, From this eminence
Looking to eastward hills
All is improbable because unknown—
Perhaps this vertiginous stance is my undoing. . . .

As once at pole of love I fixed my standard
Preempting a domain, so now
In the dubious country, on a landslide's cicatrice
Infirmly poised I loose a tentative flag,
Hoping nothing. Is this to grow old?
Have I, love's subaltern, become afraid?

So to desire in the morning
And at evening make
The same impetuous promises unfulfilled,
To observe a hill turned-turtle in the west—
Is desire a landscape caught from galleries
Nowhere leading, handsome to be watched?
No, for night's hand smears out the ordered coming
And going of appreciable vistas.
Darkness in uniform occupies the town.

So, tomorrow must bring rain.
Waking, hearing the gossip of it in the poplars,
And the peace of laid dust smelling.
I shall prepare an altar for the sacrifice
And pray the god power on embarrassed knees.

PORTRAIT OF NEW ENGLAND

"One species of General Hue all over is the Cursed thing called Harmony; it
is like the Smile of a fool."
"Opposition is true Friendship."

—*Blake*.

Mark Twain was right about New England weather:
Downright contradictions, the tyrannies
Of ice usurping early April days—
The actual province of forsythia.

These hills (leavings of glaciers), ragtag stones
Frittered on slattern meadows, the clumped swale—
Retreat of Canada warblers—all repeal
Hardly their etched habitual reticence.

And even summer comes as something foreign,
Cheapens the functional birches. Tanagers
Tossing preposterous scarlet are no worse
For the black wings that keep them Puritan.

Illustrious Providences Mather showed
To triangle-trade-traffickers, farmers—or
The wry-necked Marbleheaders' brig "Desire"—
Anne Bradstreet's firm response to poethood:

These are our epic. No blurred catalogue
Of place-names, the rhetorical defeat.
Only is asked remembrance of the great,
Use of the Yankee hodgepodge pedlar's bag,

Opposite—seeming stopgaps turned to use
Skillfully, no stripped spool thrown away:
These to be hoard of an economy
Making ends meet in an exotic house.

The sweet enjoyment of similitudes
Betrayed a century. He is a ghost
Who, Pandar to logic and the scholar's lust,
Can feel no hurt of loneliness in crowds.

Those lovers who murder selfhood in their ache—
Body to body senseless—with their heat
Engender the flat laughing idiot,
Shudder from one another when they wake.

by Arthur Mizener

SOME NOTES ON THE NATURE OF ENGLISH POETRY

This is an art
Which does mend nature—change it rather; but
The art itself is nature.

THAT the Nineteenth Century should be, for the textbook understanding, the century of nature poetry is ironic, even if you allow for the fact that the contemporary mind has a hard time extending the word *nature* beyond the limited sense of rocks, and stones, and trees. For of all the periods of English literature, the Nineteenth Century was most thoroughly embarrassed by both nature and the supernatural (the two are inseparable in this context, as the diametric opposition of the older and newer senses of the word *nature* clearly indicates). Its preoccupation with the subject was the preoccupation of the man who has got hold of the tiger's tail. This is not, to be sure, a position in which it is easy to look dignified, though the Twentieth Century's concentration on the ludicrousness of the Nineteenth Century's efforts in this direction is not very intelligent. We laugh because we have lost our sense of the need for dignity, and perhaps even our sense of danger, rather than because we have found solid ground, for it is still the case with us that

between the ends of distraction
Waits mute speculation, the patient curse
That stones the eyes, or like the jaguar leaps
For his own image in a jungle pool, his victim.

The Renaissance poets on the other hand, were as nearly free from the Nineteenth Century's embarrassment as is probably desirable; it is even arguable that some of them found it too easy to "mythologize indiscriminately history, legend, trees, the sea, animals, all being humanly dramatized, somehow converted to

the nature of man." They were able to mythologize in this way because they still had the conviction of their past to support their notion of how the natural and the human fitted into a scheme created by a personal divinity. From very early in its career, however, English literature had been able, like good Catholics making bawdy jokes about holy things, to make the qualifying naturalistic observation about physical nature. *The Second Shepherd's Play* contains such a joke, but the effect of the qualification in even so powerfully naturalistic a case as this one is to strengthen the initial conviction.

And since it seldom occurred to people of the Renaissance that such a qualification might be the fundamental truth of the matter, they tended to conceive even the naturalistic qualification of their "poetic" view of the univèrse in terms determined by that view, that is, in essentially anthropomorphic terms. Spenser's Mutabilitie is a person; and the conviction about the nature of things which lies behind this procedure is, as Mr. Lewis has remarked, overt in the Mutabilitie Cantos where "behind the endless contention [of Change and Permanence] arises the deeper truth—that Change is but the mode in which Permanence expresses itself, that Reality 'is éterne in mutabilitie.'" A similar conviction lies behind the fact that Doctor Faustus is not a humanitarian materialist dependent on the powers of thinly disguised concepts called Spirits Sinister or Spirits Ironic; he is a practitioner of black magic and a friend of Mephistophilis. For by the time Elizabethan drama has come of age, there are no allegorically embodied concepts any more than there are naturalistic characters. The medieval Mankind has become Hamlet, as The World has become Claudius, The Flesh Falstaff and The Devil Iago. Nor was it any simple allegorical Machiavelli who made that grim joke about having flown the Alps and, "now the Guise is dead," come from France "To view this land and frolic with his friends." As for the naturalistic characters, if the Machiavels like Lorenzo and Iago are ostensibly purely natural persons, they cannot for a moment be mistaken for simple rationalists operating in a naturalistic world; for the Elizabethan

imagination could not avoid surrounding their successes with an air of almost literally diabolical skill or putting into their mouths a conviction of their own evil as irrational and shocking as it is superb. "To the people who told these stories," as Miss Hamilton has remarked in another connection, "all the universe was alive with the same kind of life they knew in themselves."

It is perhaps easier to see the result of this kind of thinking in the case of the simple comparison of man with the supernatural than in the more complicated cases and I will begin with it. The typical Elizabethan handling of this comparison is *Romeo and Juliet*. Romeo's comparison of Juliet to a saint is a fairly conventional instance of a familiar comparison which was saved from becoming merely emotive and hollow hyperbole by the Elizabethan assurance of the literal reality of saints and their feeling that the superiority of the saint in her kind and the superiority of Juliet in hers were intimately related. Shakespeare's use of this comparison is remarkable for its time, in so far as it is remarkable mainly because the characters involved are not merely stock instances of the comparison but defined characters with a certain lifelike independence from their duties as symbols and thus capable in their own right of seeing the incongruous and ironic aspects of the comparison ("you kiss by th' book"). The qualification of this metaphor is Mercutio's bawdy and naturalistic conjuring. Mercutio's metaphor is from magic instead of from religion, which, in the light of Doctor Faustus and Friar Bacon's experience, is probably sufficient qualification in itself. But Mercutio's joke goes further; it makes the assumption that man's real "spirit" is his sex; and Mercutio's speech is full of the details of the art of conjuring more to suggest how convincingly it may be reduced to sex than to suggest that sex is the material manifestation of a powerful spirit.

This is the qualifying naturalistic observation on the love of Romeo and Juliet, but no one has ever supposed it seriously endangered the initial conviction of the play. Mercutio is recognizably the younger brother of Thersites, but he has always passed for an amusing fellow because in the context of the play

his talk is bound to appear incurably frivolous, and frequently his own actions belie his talk and sometimes his talk itself does. For not even Mercutio's imagination has been completely corrupted by his naturalism as Thersites' imagination has been. His qualification has weight, certainly, and he dies cursing the idealistic and, to him, irrelevant nonsense in supporting which he has been killed. Nevertheless, for all of this qualification, the play firmly supports the initial conception of human love and Romeo and Juliet go, like martyred saints, to their star-lit lovers' heaven out of the garish, sun-lit world of the nurse and Mercutio, who jest at scars that never felt a wound. The firmness with which *Romeo and Juliet* asserts the validity of this comparison between human and divine love is in striking contrast to the herculean effort it costs *Antony and Cleopatra* to make a similar assertion. The weight of the naturalistic view has become much greater in the latter play.

II

Historically speaking, what is most interesting to watch is the way the emphasis gradually shifted. With the early Elizabethans the emphasis was mainly on the fundamental similarity of the life of man, nature, and the supernatural. The early Elizabethans retained their predecessors' vivid sense of the reality of ethical abstractions, and as a consequence the immediately human tended to enter their poetry mainly as the more or less conventionalized vehicle for these abstractions, as personification. For them nature was on much the same footing in this respect as humanity and, under the pressure of classical mythology and the French and Italian uses of elaborate figurative language, they tended to personify the abstract forces of nature with the same facility with which they applied personification to ethical abstractions. It is more often than not the case in their poetry that the ethical personification is Christian while the nature to which it is compared is given a Pagan personification; indeed, examples can be found of almost every possible combination of these ingredients.

In spite of a marked tendency to become more specific and concrete about the human—as in the use of historical characters in *The Mirror for Magistrates* (where the characters are, in addition, types rather than personifications)—and to stress the medieval delight in the details of physical nature as such—as in the opening stanzas of Sackville's *Induction*—the abstraction remained sufficiently in the foreground of the early Elizabethan's minds to prevent their being troubled by the clash between Pagan and Christian persons at the level of personification, as Milton was. The sentence Mr. Renwick quotes from Ronsard is typical of the current understanding of the situation: "The Muses, Apollo, Mercury, Pallas, and other such deities represent to us nothing more than the powers of God, to Whom the first men gave several names for the divers effects of His incomparable Majesty." The habit of applying the names of the classical gods to Christian figures is a logical extension of this view; E. K. (gloss for May, 1. 54) is typical: "*Great Pan* is Christ. . . . The name is most rightly (me thinkes) applyed to him, for Pan signifieth all, or omnipotent, etc." Milton, of course, used a variation of this procedure to get the world of classical 'mythology' into *Paradise Lost*.

Spenser's incomparable gift for detailed elaboration was devoted to a mixture of this kind:

At last the golden Orientall gate
Of greatest heauen gan to open faire,
And *Phoebus* fresh, as bridegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie haire:
And hurled his glistring beames through gloomy aire.
Which when the wakeful Elfe perceiu'd streight way
He started vp, and did him selfe prepaire,
In sun-bright armes, and battailous array:
For with that Pagan proud he combat will that day.

There is a nice fusion, if, to our tastes, not a complete ordering, of Pagan and Christian elements here. Phoebe, fresh as the Psalmist's bridegroom, comes dancing (with, I suppose, both a pagan grace and the rejoicing of a strong man to run a race) from the gate of a heaven which is actually felt simultaneously in terms of the clear and lovely classical fantasy on nature and in

terms of a Christian vision of the metaphysical source of the meaning of life. It is not easy to imagine what Dr. Johnson would have made of such "impious equivocation" had he felt called upon to take it as seriously as it must surely have been meant; and Spenser has not made matters simpler for critics like him by bringing the whole account of Phoebus to bear on the arming of Holiness "in sun-bright armes" for the combat with the "Pagan" Sansjoy.

The point here is, I think, that the general connection of the life of man and the life of nature which supports the initial act of personification is unquestionable; and Spenser is sufficiently preoccupied with the Red Cross Knight and Sansjoy as ethical abstractions and with Phoebus as an abstraction from nature so that, with the help of the devices of his day for subordinating mythology and romance to Christian doctrine, he was able to escape any feeling of conflict at the level of personification. Phoebus is light, one of the major symbols, not only for Spenser but for almost all poetry—Shakespeare is a curious partial exception—for life, good (compare, for example, *The Faerie Queene*, 3. 2. 24); that he was as a person pagan and at this level more "naturally" to be associated with the "Pagan proud" is irrelevant for Spenser, for it is not at this level that he is being natural. A better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas indeed; for, with certain modifications, Milton's poetry works in this same way.

This ultimate dependence for order on the abstract ideas because they were Nature is far, however, from diminishing Spenser's acute awareness of Phoebus' personal characteristics; it was, in fact, the easier for him to take account of them just because he was less responsible at this level, did not, that is, have to give a significance to every detail. This was official doctrine: "Not all things which are feigned in figures are to be thought to have significance; for many things are added, along with those that have significance, for the sake of order and connexion." Spenser uses this principle in his metaphors as freely as he does in his allegory, about which he himself remarked that "by occasion hereof many other adventures are intermeddled; but rather as

Accidents than intendments." In all probability it is only ages which are uncertain about the great underlying correspondences which cultivate the practice of demonstrating a correspondence in every minute particular; certainly it is such ages which are likely to breed the kind of poetry which forgets Nature and, by accepting what is feigned literally, end by substituting the naturalistic for Nature. This is not to say that any kind of "intermeddlement" will do. There is a firm grasp of the fact of the sunrise in Spenser's stanza and a clear picture of Apollo. It is these which prevent the vehicle of the metaphor from failing as a result of the difficulty of visualizing the sun with dew on it—the Player King does a little better at this point: "The instant burst of clamour that she made/. . . Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven/And passion in the gods"—or of imagining anyone occupied to so little purpose as Apollo is. (I do not mean to pretend not to see that this is Light routing Darkness; the looseness consists in Light's being personified and the "gloomy aire's" not being.) I do not know if all the details of this personification may justly be thought of as carrying over to the comparison of the Red Cross Knight to Apollo. Certainly the Red Cross Knight's "sun-bright armes" ("the armour of a Christian man") are intended to be compared to the "glistring beames" with which Apollo attacks the darkness, as the virtuous and enlightened Elf is about to attack the darkly evil Pagan. And it is tempting to suppose that since the strength of Holiness is that of the sun, of "the god unshorn," the references to Apollo's hair and to the bridegroom's energy are also significant. If they are, Spenser's use of this comparison is even closer to the uses made of it by Raleigh, Shakespeare, Herrick, Milton, and Pope, which are referred to below, than this essay has dared to suppose.

In any event, Spenser certainly gained a good deal by making the resources of mythology and romance available to ethical allegory in this way. The risk he ran was, of course, that in such a serious discourse the incongruity among the persons or between the personification and its significance might defeat the intention. What saved Spenser was his power of holding, through

any confusion of comparisons, to the one or two things which will preserve a kind of order among them and his power of focusing the serious attention on the significance rather than on the personification. It is the assumption of this essay that the conception of reality in the end determines the poet's conception of language, that the style is, not so much the man, as his world. There is an evident connection between the two in Spenser, in any event, for exactly as he found a way to control the multiplicity of his comparisons, so he felt that Nature found a way to control Mutabilitie. It is surely significant that by the end of the tradition of which Spenser was the first wholly great poet, this impudent female had become a tigerish Spenserian monster, a "Nature red in tooth and claw," to which Tennyson's heart played the pathetic and ineffectual Saint George. Such she remains today, as the passage quoted from Mr. Tate in the first paragraph of this essay implies.

The danger of Spenser's eclectic method of making figures, for poetry in general, is that it encourages poets to think they can safely do anything, or even nothing, with metaphor: Milton had a not dissimilar effect on certain Eighteenth Century poets. Peele, for example, reduces Spenser to what I suspect is something worse than nonsense. His adaption of Spenser's personification in the following passage is either meaningless decoration or else the application of it to an abstraction (conquest) so inadequately conceived as to suggest an anarchic conception of metaphor. The extremely casual but still vaguely meaningful use of "crown'd" and the peculiar way the bridegroom has gone astray make you suspect the latter:

As when the sun attir'd in glistening robe,
Comes dancing from his oriental gate,
And bridegroom-like hurls through the gloomy air
His radiant beams, such doth king David show,
Crown'd with the honour of his enemies' town. . . .

In later Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry, the emphasis shifts gradually in the direction of the naturalistic view of the universe until the two views reach that terrible balance of authority which Shakespeare forced Troilus to look on in the flesh:

O madness of discourse,
That cause sets up with and against itself!
Bi-fold authority! where reason can revolt
Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
Without revolt: this is and is not Cressid!

This state of mind was the turning point, though chronologically speaking Shakespeare perhaps anticipated its general arrival. From this point on the weight of conviction falls more and more heavily on the side of what Troilus calls "beauty" and less and less heavily on the side of what he calls "soul," and his

thing inseparate

Divides more wider than the sky and earth;
And yet the spacious breadth of this division
Admits no orifex for a point as subtle
As Ariachne's broken woof to enter.

For a long time an intense awareness of this problem's reality endured, in spite of the growing predominance of the naturalistic view, and one can trace this awareness in those for whom the authority was, at least ostensibly, no longer bi-fold through Rochester and the Restoration dramatists to the end of the Eighteenth Century and even, at least in their poignant sense of its loss, to such Nineteenth Century poets as Matthew Arnold. For to have loss assume all reason is a very different thing from the disappearance of a sense of loss.

Like the supernatural comparisons such as that of Juliet and the saint, the comparisons drawn from nature, which are so frequent in the Elizabethan plays of the nineties, depend for their relevance on the conviction that these two kinds of life, the life of man and the life of nature, are fundamentally the same. Thus Lennox's advice to the men about to attack Macbeth, that they pour

so much [blood] as it needs
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds,

is apparently not even felt as wit, in spite of the—to us—extremely remote analogy between human good and evil (both individual and social: the play on *sovereign* brings in the divine right of kings and the whole social system built around it) and the natural "good and evil" in the flower and the weeds. This

goes on everywhere in Shakespeare. And if there is a certain air of wit about Raleigh's serious use of this same kind of comparison, its source is rather practical than metaphysical (this is Mr. Empson's passage):

So could she not, if she were not the sun . . .

Knowing she can renew, and can create
Green from the ground, and flowers, even out of stone,
By virtue lasting over time and date,
Leaving us only woe, which like the moss,
Having compassion of unburied bones,
Cleaves to mischance, and unrepaired loss. . . .

This is a particularly fine example of the "poetic" view: by making Elizabeth the sun with its life-giving power, Raleigh makes her God. This is the full use, in a very clear form, of the unifying comparison which this view makes available.

III

The wit of the metaphysical poets, which endured in one form or another through the Eighteenth Century, is, in this respect, a kind of casuistry made necessary by the weight of the naturalistic qualification in their minds, by their serious doubts of the validity of the traditional conception of the natural and supernatural context of man's life which earlier writers had taken for granted. Donne's characteristic use of the comparison between the lady and the saint or angel is revealing:

Yet I thought thee
—For thou lovest truth—an angel, at first sight;
But when I saw thou saw'st my heart,
And knew'st my thoughts beyond an angel's art,
When thou knew'st what I dreamt, when thou knew'st when
Excess of joy would wake me, and camest then,
I must confess, it could not choose but be
Profane, to think thee anything but thee.

This is surely a shaken use of the comparison; in two crucial places, in the fourth and last lines, Donne is asking us to take very seriously indeed what Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* asks us to take mainly as a joke. So far indeed, has Donne pushed the naturalistic qualification that his use of the stock comparison

may appear at first glace to be like the Eighteenth Century mock heroic—"Say why are beauties prais'd and honour'd most,/ . . . Why angels call'd and angel-like ador'd?"—and can even be mistaken for the merely elegant euphemism of romantic fiction. It is neither of these, of course, for Donne's angel is no mere euphemism but a reality, and a reality importunate enough to keep the fourth and last lines nearer serious hyperbole than ironic statement of fact. The pressure the stock comparison is bearing here is nonetheless very great. "For thou lovest truth": I apologize for having even momentarily thought you a being so lacking in the final and most valuable reality. "I must confess": I confess to you, as I might to God, that it was profane of me to confuse you with so inferior a being as an angel.

A simple case from one of the less serious courtly poets will indicate how this kind of casuistry worked out so far as nature was concerned:

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes
Which, starlike, sparkle in their skies . . .
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

This is a very different use of the deadness of stone from Raleigh's. Raleigh's use is, I think, the characteristic one for his age ("Who moving others are themselves as stone"). It might be that only God could make life flow from a stone, as Queen Elizabeth, in the capacity of God's deputy, might have, as Moses, in the same capacity, did; nevertheless it had the capacity for life: neither Raleigh, Shakespeare, nor Moses thought it futile to pray that life might come from stone. In Herrick's poem, however, it is no accident that the sparkling of the ruby should suggest that all sparkling things of the physical universe, including the stars, have a hard, inanimate preciousness which is essentially different from the *starlike*, soft and human preciousness of her eyes. It is this same suspicion of an essential difference between the human and the natural which produces the ingenuity of "*their skies*," which is so careful not to identify the separate spheres

of stars and eyes. The wit here is almost an apology, a disclaimer of any intention of seriously comparing the two spheres, very like, in its motivation, the Eighteenth Century's theoretical insistence that similes were only illustrations and not seriously intended. It brings Herrick recognizably closer to

Bright star would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night . . .

which is not an "interinanimating" comparison at all. I suppose this may have something to do with the tendency of romantic readers to exaggerate Herrick's importance at the expense of better metaphysical poets.

This same carefully hedged dependence on the validity of the analogy is present in Milton in a more complex way. Where the metaphysical poet asserts the comparison boldly, so boldly as to put the wary reader on his guard for the denials of it which are hinted at, Milton bluntly denies a whole range of its implications. This looks like the strategic retreat to shorten the lines of defense which is evident in Doctor Johnson. In fact, however, these implications which are ostensibly denied are, in Milton, reasserted by the only apparent confusion and irrelevance of his syntax and figurative language.

The apparent narrowness and firmness of Milton's direct statements are in general deceptive enough:

Men call'd him *Mulciber*; and how he fell
From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry *Jove*
Sheer o'er the Crystal Battlements: from Morn
To Moon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
A Summer's day; and with the setting Sun
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,
On Lemnos th' *Aegean* Isle: thus they relate,
Erring; . . .

It is easy enough, after this, to suppose Milton is discarding the whole fable as erroneous. But in fact all he says is that the details of time and place in this account are fabulous and in error, not the essential facts. Mulciber is only a mistaken or alternate name for Mammon, and Mammon is as real as any person in *Paradise Lost*:

Erring; for he with his rebellious route
Fell long before.

This tale about Mulciber is not, then, a mere fable which accidentally parallels the true story of Mamon and the other fallen angels; it is an essentially true account, confused only in details. Milton's casual appearance of denying the whole story is a kind of deception. Moreover, it is impossible to say just where the falseness of the pagan version, in Milton's opinion, begins. In fact, Milton's account of it is such that it is impossible to say surely that any of it is false.

Milton sounds as if he were downright impatient with all this nonsense about Mulciber; as if it were not his doing that this account got into *Paradise Lost* nor his fault that Mulciber's fall is so beautifully and convincingly detailed. The reader may accept this disclaimer, as the Eighteenth Century felt bound to, in order to save Milton from the charge of impiety: "but here [such equivocations] are indecent, and at least approach to impiety, of which, however, I believe the writer not to have been conscious." But this is to preserve Milton's piety, Eighteenth Century style, at the cost of his poetry; it is a far more damaging defense than Bentley's fictitious reviser, whom Bentley confessed, according to Doctor Johnson's indignant report, not to believe in. In order to sustain such a defense, one must suppose Milton to have been as uneconomical a user of nature as his late Eighteenth Century imitators like Thomas Warton and as casual a confuser of Jove and God as any careless user of "diction." For according to this defense, Milton's substitution of Heaven with its crystal battlements for Olympus must be merely for the sake of insignificant elegance (or is Heaven a fable too?). Yet surely what we have here is the Spenserian combination of classical and Christian heavens with the additional complication that Milton has worked in, as he does everywhere in *Paradise Lost*, a "scientific"—though to be sure conservative and Ptolemaic—account of the universe to satisfy the "scientific" prejudice of his day. According to this defense, too, it must be only grammatical carelessness that the latter part of the sentence tends to say,

not that they fabled how Mulciber fell and dropped on Lemnos, but that he did fall and drop there, dying with the lovely summer day, dropping like the autumn evening's falling star.

The very great extent to which Milton is still committed to this basic comparison of the lives of man, nature and the supernatural is, in fact, frequently clear enough:

nor appear'd
Less than Arch Angel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n
Looks through the Horizontal misty Air
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon
In dim Eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the Nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes Monarchs.

By the first of these sun comparisons the archangel ruined is the sun deprived of its power to dispel with its beams the foul mists of winter and make the earth fruitful once more; the fallen angel is Apollo, shorn. This is an exceedingly impious equivocation, since it makes Satan, before his fall, "the god unshorn." Nor is it easy to believe the epithet is insignificant here; with all his learning Milton must certainly have known how common a symbol of virility the hair was among the Greeks. Herrick, a much less learned man, knew this, as his use of it in "Corinna's Going A-maying" clearly shows:

Get up, get up, for shame, the blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.

The second comparison makes a more Elizabethan use of the analogy between the life of man and the life of nature; it is much the same use Shakespeare makes of the eclipse in *Macbeth* and goes very well so far as God's obscuring of Satan's original glory portends disaster precisely as God's obscuring of the sun was thought to. The trouble begins with the perplexed monarchs, for unless one is willing to suppose the changes in government which the archangel's eclipse portends good, one must suppose that Milton sympathizes with the perplexed monarchs' fear of change. It is not an easy thing to suppose, either way, for there are Milton's stated views of Satan's wickedness on the one hand and there are his notorious political opinions on the other. Yet

Milton did not have to bring in these perplexed monarchs; they are his own deliberate choice of an example of the kind of disasters eclipses portend. Tomkyns, Charles II's licenser of the press, objected to this passage and it is customary for editors to take a very high tone with him, pointing to Milton's denials of any belief in astrology in his prose writings. But denials like this are scarcely final with a mind like Milton's and Tomkyns had a better case than the editors usually recognize. All this makes the part of Milton's mind which is at work in the poem's figurative language a supporter of the divine right of kings as well as some one for whom heaven was populated by Apollo and the rest of the old pagan gods. And this is a kind of extension of that subtle and persistent tendency in the poem to make God an absolute monarch curiously like Charles I and Satan a rebel against tyranny. Milton's was not a simple mind, and in one way and another he managed to get most of it into *Paradise Lost*.

Thus Milton, like the rest of the century, despite his inability to accept openly the full implications of the traditional analogy between man, nature, and the supernatural, succeeded in preserving them by a kind of wonderful deception (perhaps he was, in some senses, a victim of it himself), so that beneath all the qualification his poetry too is founded on that analogy. This reliance is certainly no part of his stated intention. The Christian flank having been turned by the pagan and rationalist outlook of the day, Milton retired to the defenses of theology and set out to justify the ways of God to men rationally, precisely as James I, when the divinity of kings came under fire from the same quarter, undertook a logical proof of that divinity. Milton's trick of not letting the right hand of argument know what the left hand of simile and metaphor is doing turned out to be a dangerous precedent: the metaphysicals offered a much safer procedure. But this is not to say that in Milton the left hand is ever really unoccupied.

It is the metaphysical procedure, in any event, which the main line of English poetry followed for the next hundred years or more. The irony which Donne's struggle with the "commonsense,"

naturalistic view of nature and the supernatural induced in his poetry became the mock heroic and the satiric by the Eighteenth Century, when the commonsense view constituted the whole ostensible content of the poetry. Theoretically the Eighteenth Century held that metaphors and similes are merely illustrations, to be avoided in serious discourse. To Doctor Johnson, for example, Shakespeare's puns were "what luminous vapours are to the traveller . . . sure to lead him out of the way, and sure to engulf him in the mire." Ostensibly Doctor Johnson's traveller in the horse pond is Mrs. Hardcastle, not Stephano; that is to say, merely a fanciful descriptive illustration, not a comparison based on the fundamental similarity and constant interaction of the life of man and the life of nature (for in Shaksepeare's case, as Ferdinand had suffered his sea-change, so did Stephano his—"I' th' filthy mantled pool"). Yet this metaphorical description of figurative language was pursued with a curious insistence, as if it somehow mattered, by those who thought like Doctor Johnson:

Which yet make these retreats [the resort of the schoolmen to obscure language] more like the dens of robbers, or holes of foxes, than the fortresses of fair warriors: which if it be hard to get them out of, it is not for the strength that is in them, but the briars and thorns, and the obscurity of the thickets they are beset with. For untruth being unacceptable to the mind of man, there is no other defense left for absurdity but obscurity.

In any event, this was the Eighteenth Century's theoretical conception of the matter, endorsed, as usual, by Pope in one of those neat similes of his:

But true expression, like th' unchanging Sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon;
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.

This is more like Seventeenth Century poetry than we ordinarily bother to remember, perhaps because its likeness appears to be mainly a habit of expression. Pope still has the Seventeenth Century's habit of keeping these things straight, of having similes say something, and something that he means. This simile plainly

means what its verbs say: "Clears and improves . . . gilds but alters . . . none." All these things are just as true, if not truer, about the sun's relation to what it shines on as they are about expression's relation to what it expresses. There is a history of Eighteenth Century natural science and Eighteenth Century metaphysics behind his simile. And if it is true that commonsense observation detects nothing, when the sun shines on an Eighteenth Century prospect, except an improved clarity and, at best, a Claude-like gilding, it is not likely that such observation will detect any less mechanical a relation between the hard kernel of observed fact and reasoned knowledge and the expression given to it. No wonder Eighteenth Century theory conceived of simile as illustration.

Yet it is impossible to explain "the justness," as his age called it, of Pope's similes, the loving care with which he elaborated and made precise the details of a comparison, unless it be on the assumption that the vehicle of his metaphor was as important a part of the statement as the tenor; unless, in short, there was, in the Eighteenth Century, a kind of unconscious conviction that the relationship between tenor and vehicle was something more than the relationship between idea and illustration, was in some way both objective and organic. It was typical of Seventeenth Century poetry—that "glaring chaos and wild heap of wit"—to be intensely conscious not only of the relationship within nature which Pope ignores but of the living relationship between nature and man. Thus both Raleigh and Shakespeare noticed that the sun alters every object it touches, not infrequently for the worse as well as for the better, and noticed, too, that there is a sense in which to observe this fact of nature is to observe something about the life of man:

but it is I
That, lying by the violet in the sun,
Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with virtuous season.

It is Pope's indirect dependence on this older view which makes for that habit of expression in his poetry so reminiscent of the

Seventeenth Century. Perhaps it was his clearer understanding of this matter which made Doctor Johnson protest against Pope's more famous definition of wit, that it made wit a matter of expression rather than of thought. For with all his impatience of nymphs and shepherds and occasional gods—those relations between the life of man and nature and the supernatural in which he could not believe—Doctor Johnson had a strong sense of the importance of that narrowed range of relations among them which he did believe in: it was his strength. Pope had, in his poetry, the strength of his indirectness, a matter of almost perfect tact, rather than a belligerent narrowness.

This strength is most evident in Pope's use of the mock heroic. The specific instance is obvious; for there is no point at all in the following mock heroic comparison of Belinda to the sun unless the serious heroic comparison which it is mocking still had some life in it:

Smooth flowed the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.

Pope's tact here centers, of course, in the word *world*. Belinda smiles at the *beau monde* and it is gay, and she joins with the smooth waves and the gentle zephyrs to make the natural world gay: she is the sun. This is clear enough. But the ultimate point which makes Pope's poem a great one and not just a clever one, the point on which the mockery depends, will hardly be clear unless the reader is aware of the older view of the relation of the life of man and the life of nature. For this ultimate point is the deification of Belinda. Pope is saying in his indirect way what Raleigh has said so directly:

So could she not, if she were not the sun . . .

Knowing she can renew, and can create
Green from the ground, and flowers, even out of stone. . . .

It was this indirect use of the comparison, so very like Herrick's use ("When all your world of beauty's gone"), if even more completely hedged, which Arnold failed to understand and failing, said, in that unfortunate terminology of his, that Pope's

poetry was not written in the heart. This kind of failure comes very close, I think, to being what Dryden and Pope were talking about when they spoke of Dullness, and for them Dullness was very nearly identical with evil: at least, it was the mock heroic's persona for evil. For to miss what the Dull missed, in literature and life, was to miss the essential meaning of both, since the basic jest of the mock heroic is the solemn pretense that the limited conditions of its "hero" or "heroine's" life are the conditions of life as a whole. The Eighteenth Century could scarcely use the word *world* without this kind of mockery "by which word *world*," says Tristram Shandy, "need I in this place inform your worship, that I would be understood to mean no more of it, than a small circle . . . of four *English* miles diameter, or thereabouts. . . ?" It is this kind of detailed implication of a larger and heroic life in every line which gives Pope's poems their greatness.

That the conditions were such as to demand this tactful indirectness is proved by the relative failure of the Eighteenth Century epic. The old view of things would not stand any more weight than Pope's indirection put on it; the direct statement of it was, for his age, both unnatural and unhuman. Doctor Johnson was as usual both clear and firm on this point:

To select a singular event, and swell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of spectres and predictions, has little difficulty; for he that forsakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little use: we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find something to imitate or decline.

Perhaps the modern reader may feel there is a little overconfidence here, an insufficient sense of the impoverishment, in respect to that "essentially vital" power as Coleridge called the imagination, of a belief which dispenses too freely with "spectres and predictions." But Doctor Johnson was so sure that "Providence gives the power, of which reason teaches the use," that he never suspected reason might find it impossible to stop short of Providence itself. The Nineteenth Century was not going

to be so sure as this that in the end it was improving matters, as Henry Sidgwick made so touchingly clear when he wrote:

Well, the years pass, the struggle with what Carlyle used to call "Hebrew old clothes" is over, Freedom is won, and what does Freedom bring us to? It brings us face to face with atheistic science: the faith in God and Immortality, which we have been struggling to clear from superstition suddenly seems to be *in the air*. . . .

But Doctor Johnson could hardly foresee how far this clearing away of appendages was to go, and Pope is a triumphant demonstration of how right he was for his own day. For Pope so tactfully asks us to believe Belinda is the sun that we scarcely know we have been asked; to have asked us directly to believe that Anne, who "dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea," had divine powers like the sun's had little difficulty and as little use; and Doctor Johnson was happy to observe that Pope "was never reduced to the necessity of soliciting the sun to shine upon a birthday, of calling the Graces and Virtues to a wedding. . . ." When he was not writing his mock heroic about Belinda and sylphs and gnomes "he was at liberty to be silent."

There is an obvious qualification here which ought perhaps to be mentioned. The Eighteenth Century could make a kind of direct use of the life of nature. I suppose this use must owe something to Milton; certainly it owes a great deal to the Dryden of the Anne Killigrew ode. This use was possible because it was such that the reader never needed to take serious and direct notice of it (one of the things which annoyed the Eighteenth Century most about the metaphysical poets was just this impolite kind of insistence that they be supposed to mean exactly what they said—"for I,/ Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,/ Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me"). In the Eighteenth Century the comparison of man and nature, when made openly, presented itself to the reader at best as diction, as the elegant observance of an established and recognized etiquette (OED 1750) which did the poet's manners credit rather than committed him and the reader quite seriously to its implications. At its most

dangerous, the comparison presented itself as sentiment. At its best, therefore, it was limited to the more formal kinds, to odes, elegies and imitations. Pope's "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" is a good example:

What though no sacred earth allow the room,
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be drest
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow:
While angels with their silver wings o'er shade
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.

The turf which lies lightly and the morn which weeps deliberately insist on their conventionality here, and we are comfortable with them because the convention they represent is so well authenticated: they come of a very good family; there is a great deal of this feeling in the age's attitude toward the classics. In the same way, the echo of the metaphysical conceit presents itself to us as little more than a charming verbal solution of the unfortunate lady's unchristian burial. Behind our backs, as it were, after we have admitted them to our society as a result of their having demonstrated in this way their politeness, these figures are of course doing something more: serious and not so simply conventional, just as Pope's mock heroic is; but their ostensible claim is to nothing more than elegance and politeness, just as the ostensible claim of Pope's mock heroic is to nothing more than neatness and sense.

All this comes out in Fielding, a much simpler man than Pope, very clearly. Fielding got much of his humor out of the mock heroic by the simple device of asking us to notice the snobbery ("A battle sung by the Muse in the Homeric style, and which none but the classical reader can taste") or the practical ineffectiveness of this polite use of the old comparison:

Twelve times did the iron register of time beat on the sonorous bell metal, summoning the ghosts to rise and walk their nightly round.—In plainer language, it was twelve o'clock, and all the family, as we have said, lay buried in drink and sleep. . . .

Yet for all this downright man's scorn of its mere politeness, the old analogy between the life of man and the life of nature was what Fielding turned to when he came to describe Sophia, who was so lovingly patterned after his own Charlotte. The "short hint of what we can do in the sublime" with which this chapter begins is not at all the same kind of thing as the Butler-inspired account of Molly Seagrim's heroic defense of her new dress.

The greatness of Pope's poetry, then, depends on his indirect importation into it of the larger context of man's life, an importation most evident in the mock heroic. In that kind Pope achieves his versions of almost all the powerful effects of his predecessors. The close of *The Dunciad* is the most obvious case of the use of nature on a large scale; the sylphs and gnomes of *The Rape of the Lock* are an instance of the sustained use of the supernatural; and the details of saints and angels are everywhere:

Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old-age away; . . .

To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.

It is this survival of a feeling for the older view of things which leads Pope to pursue the incongruous mock heroic or satiric use of it with such insistent if inobtrusive care and gives him that habit of expression which every reader notices. The sustained imperial comparison in *Of the Character of Women* is a good example:

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!
Power all their end, but Beauty all their means:
In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,
As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age:
For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;
No thought of peace or happiness at home.
But Wisdom's triumph is well-timed Retreat,
As hard a science to the Fair as Great!
Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,
Worn out in public, weary every eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die.

What is evident here is the irony of the comparison: the "divine" power of these queens is their physical beauty, as it was, for the

Greeks, Cressida's and as it was, for Mercutio, Rosalind's; Pope appears not to be deplored this fact at all—so far has the old view affirmed by *Romeo and Juliet* sunk into the background; his moral, as usual, is:

What then remains but well our pow'r to use
And keep good-humour still whate'er we lose?

In exactly the same way the ostensible political moral is an appeal for the benevolent tyrant, for Ulysses' ideal ruler rather than Troilus'. Yet there is a pressing of this comparison between queens and women which will not quite be explained as the merely clever exploitation of a reasonable illustrative resemblance. Pope felt a mystery in the power of women which he could adequately convey only by comparing women to queens. This is a feeling analogous to the one which drives Milton to make Eve, before her fall, into something very like a beautiful pagan goddess:

To *Pales*, or *Pomona*, thus adorn'd,
Lik'est she seem'd, *Pomona* when she fled
Vertumnus, or to *Ceres* in her Prime,
Yet Virgin of *Proserpina* from *Jove*.

What makes this comparison the only means for conveying Pope's feeling is the ultimate, if obscured, reality for him of the divinity of queens. Pope was as keenly aware that queens could be mortal and Tyrants as he was that women in general could be mortal and Beauties: this is the evident ground of his figure. But he knew in his way also that kings and queens were partly divine and that their inevitable mortality made for that tragic dilemma which Richard II had to face. It was terrible as well as ludicrous, as Pope saw life demonstrating on all hands to him, with that persistence of vision which made him so fine a poet, that these divine creatures were after all so often only humanly "divine," only, that is, very charming and mortal:

For you have but mistook me all this while:
I live with bread like you, feel want, taste grief,
Need friends: subjected thus
How can you say to me I am a king!

This is the less evident but no less powerful ground of Pope's

figure. His Beauties are fallen angels as his Tyrants are glistering Phaethons wanting the manage of unruly jades. There is even in Pope's attitude here, I think, something of that subtle complex of feelings about the necessity and tragedy of knowledge and experience which made Milton compare Eve in her lovely innocence to goddesses of fruitfulness while they were "Yet Virgin." Like Milton, Pope too could see that though in a fallen world we "cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue" (so that there is a kind of pathetic rightness beneath the ostensible wrongness in Eve's desire to face temptation alone in the garden), there still remains in women, as some of the angelic glory remained in Satan, enough of the original divine innocence to make men worship them. For all his Reason Pope was no more a naturalist than he was a republican.

Pope is perhaps the last great poet who is in this tradition, with its dependence on the old explanation of the natural and supernatural contexts of man's life to justify serious comparisons among the three. Wordsworth is clearly the beginning of that eccentricity of "philosophy" which has been disturbing unprofessional readers ever since. Wordsworth managed to save, for himself anyway, a bearable world by virtue of this eccentricity, as few other poets since his time have. After Wordsworth the Nineteenth Century poets tended more and more to use the Pathetic Fallacy or to fall back on a kind of emotional mysticism ("And like a man in wrath the heart/Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'"). And whatever Ruskin may have said by way of excusing the Pathetic Fallacy, he never said that to project human feelings onto external nature was true. The richest tradition of English poetry is clearly near an end when the poets, finding themselves deprived of all "appendages of spectres and predictions," are forced to make strictly human love the one resort left to man confronted by a wholly alien nature:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! For the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain. . . .

This is to find Donne's lady the only "angel" and Herrick's ruby alone starlike. The only resort for such an attitude is romantic irony. For the end of believing nature exclusively natural is to believe man so too.

by Cleanth Brooks

MR. KAZIN'S AMERICA

IN one who has taken his stand "on his native ground" rather positively, and indeed, is accustomed to being chided for having taken it perhaps too consciously, Alfred Kazin's new book¹ provokes very mixed feelings. In it, Mr. Kazin traces the history of American literature from the time of William Dean Howells down to the troubled present, in which, with his last chapter, our literature comes to rest on its native grounds. Mr. Kazin's general purpose is admirable, his enthusiasms are warm, his insights and judgments on various figures are usually sound and occasionally brilliant. For example, his account of Hemingway is much more knowing than most recent accounts; he makes the proper reservations with regard to Steinbeck, and his revision of the stock estimate of Erskine Caldwell is positively refreshing. *On Native Grounds*, one predicts, will prove to be very popular. It has already been highly praised by such people as Lewis Gannett and Harry Hansen. It is well that a large public stands to get summaries so sound as those which Mr. Kazin provides.

But it is precisely because Mr. Kazin is aiming at literary history and not merely at an amiable and competent journalism, that I feel that a minority report is in order. This essay is very frankly that. Mr. Kazin has a thesis. It is one which rejects Marxist interpretations of American literature—he sees to it that the Marxists are soundly spanked for their antics during the 1930's. Furthermore, it is not the thesis suggested by some intransigent Southerners—they are soundly spanked too. His thesis is, one suggests, what may be called the new American na-

¹*On Native Grounds*, New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1942. \$3.75.

tionalist thesis; but one treads cautiously here. Mr. Kazin is very careful in making direct statements; he prefers to qualify other men's pronouncements; to give a pat on the back here, a slap on the wrist there; to proceed by hint and suggestion rather than to come forward with unequivocal statements. And as for first principles—in bringing these forward, Mr. Kazin is most chary of all. My impression, however, is that Mr. Kazin's general interpretation differs very little from the recently stated position of, say, Van Wyck Brooks. He repudiates Brooks's violence, it is true, and he reprimands Brooks for confusing the relations "between the good of society and the life of art." But so far as I can tell, Mr. Kazin's own interpretation represents Van Wyck Brook's essential position, clipped, trimmed, and generally tidied up. This fact, too, is calculated to make for the book's popularity, for the thesis is certainly bound to be, in wartime, a very popular one.

The return to native grounds is unquestionably, as Mr. Kazin's last chapter indicates, a fact of our time. For example, in 1938, Gilbert Seldes produced *Mainland*, a somewhat hysterical praise of all that smacked of the genuine "anti-European" areas of the country. Mr. Harold Stearns, after bidding America farewell with a rather devastating report on the state of American civilization, returned a few years ago to give America another chance. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, too, has lived to change his tune about American provincialism, and Mr. Kazin's own last chapter is crowded with the names of former sinners against provincial America, now at the mourners' bench. But gratifying as it is to welcome the prodigals home, and significant as it may be that the prodigals are now coming home, still there are writers who did not need to wait so long to discover the virtues of America, and who incidentally did not see those virtues as necessarily antithetical to the real virtues of Europe. Mr. Kazin can put, with fine good humor, the rhetorical question: "who in Mencken's heyday could seriously resent a writer who so joyously declared" the various nonsenses that he declared. But there were people who did at that time resent Mencken's childish and es-

sentially negative bombast. There were people who were able to make a distinction between the talents of William Faulkner and Erskine Caldwell, even before literary communism went sour. There were people who in the early 1930's were able to see the essential limitations of the New Humanists on other grounds than the fact that they preached a sexual morality somewhat at variance with that of Greenwich Village. One might expect these people to receive decorations in Mr. Kazin's dress-parade review. But no; Mr. Kazin is mindful of the Biblical example. He rightly exercises himself with seasoning the fatted calf for the prodigal rather than concerning himself for the stay-at-homes. They earn no merit for prevision just as Mr. Kazin's reformed heroes incur no demerit for having been in error. There is, of course, nothing wrong with this in itself. And yet, there are features of American literary history which make one somewhat suspicious of Mr. Kazin's decree of a blanket pardon just at this time.

From one point of view "American literary history" since the Civil War has been dominated by New York, the publishing center, and New York has been—is-dominated by fads. A reading of *On Native Grounds* itself easily gives the impression that the history of American literature is merely the history of those fads. Through Mr. Kazin's pages (though, to be sure, this is not Mr. Kazin's intention) one sees the band wagons hurry by, each crowded with its heroes of a day or of a decade. Mr. Kazin, for example, quotes from Howells—an instance of the author whose reputation has gone down before the newest fad: "I am comparatively a dead cult with my statues cut down and the grass growing over them in the pale moonlight." Or, again, Kazin refers to Fitzgerald's "painful confession of his own collapse, the essay smuggled away in *Esquire* which he called 'The Crack-Up.'" Or, once more there is mention in his pages of the author who rides his band wagon cynically—"F. Marion Crawford who had made a good thing of superplush fiction." Indeed Mr. Kazin provides more than one instance of the clever author who has been able to change, just in time, from the dis-

credited vehicle to the new band wagon, though Mr. Kazin's tact will not allow him to describe the manoeuver in these terms. But what of Mr. Kazin's own interpretation?

May not the present-day attempt to return to America's history, "the unabashed recovery of an American mythology," be merely another, and perhaps a gaudier band wagon? It is for this reason that the nature of myths and mythologies, the problem of the relation of literature to morality, the problem of the relation of the artist to his environment, even the problem of form and content—are of importance after all—rarified and esoteric as discussions of them must always appear to the mind eager for slogans and action.

Mr. Kazin is somewhat less than detailed on this whole subject. He says in his last chapter, after reviewing the resurgence of enthusiasm for America: "Here, as one liked, was either the ironic epilogue to half a century of critical modernism in America or the happy emergence of a real maturity and profound national allegiance among American writers!" Yes, but which? Surely, the author of a book which is billed as "an interpretation of modern American prose and experience" ought to be able to make up his mind here. The point is crucial for an interpretation. It is my opinion that Mr. Kazin plumps for the "happy emergence"—the title of the book would indicate this—but as I have said before, I cannot be sure. If Mr. Kazin commits himself specifically, I have not been able to locate the passage.

The "happy emergence of a real maturity" would be something of the greatest importance. But what if it be instead merely the newest whim of an incorrigible adolescence, the latest convulsion of the New York literary racket? What if it represents not a "profound national allegiance," but a phony nationalism, a synthetic product, something like one of the new plastics, produced under the war stimulus, light, brilliantly colored, and easily moulded to any desired shape? If this should be true, I think that we need to know this too. And if the new movement represents a blend of genuine elements and ersatz substitutes, I think that the important job is to establish some distinctions.

Mr. Kazin does not make those distinctions. What is worse, Mr. Kazin, it seems to me, muddies the water considerably in his anxiety to throw scorn on those critics who have dealt with the bases for making distinctions of any kind. It is just here that my concern for Mr. Kazin's principles becomes urgent. His preface seems innocent enough: "Our modern literature in America," he remarks, "is at bottom only the expression of our modern life in America." Fair enough. But it should be obvious that Mr. Kazin is here either saying nothing at all, or else that he is saying a great deal—indeed, begging his whole case. If modern literature is "at bottom only the expression of our modern life in America," then how distinguish between literature and other expressions of our modern life, such as neon signs, the advertising sections of the popular magazines, and telephone books? The quibble is a fair one; for Mr. Kazin, though he has concealed definition of literature, will never come forward with the definition. And yet his whole case rests finally on the definition. Of course, literature is related to life; and certainly modern literature is most intimately related to modern American life; but what makes it literature, and what are those relations? Mr. Kazin's manoeuvre is to assume that anybody knows what literature is, and that consequently anyone who talks about problems of form is simply a cold rhetorician who is, *ex hypothesi*, interested in nothing but "literature." The "new formalists," as he terms them, thus become anti-democratic obscurantists. But is the problem so easy? Mr. Kazin rejects Mr. Van Wyck Brooks's rough and ready account of those relationships just as he rejects the Marxists' account. But what is his own account?

In spite of Mr. Kazin's reticence, it is possible, by inspecting his comments on other critics, to reconstruct his account. "Form" for Mr. Kazin is evidently a kind of container, a kind of package in which the valuable content is held. He is, therefore, contemptuous of the study of "the structural properties" of poems; he sneers continually at "textual analysis" and concern for poetic "strategy." And if the critics in question were merely concerned with the shape and coloring of the boxes (the forms) in which

literature comes, Mr. Kazin would be quite justified in his contempt. But if these critics were so shallow as this, then Mr. Kazin has been silly to take them seriously as opponents: to call their efforts "brilliant" (before he beheads them) is too generous.

Mr. Kazin is anxious to defend those other critics who see in works of literature "not the specific formal properties but only the amount and range of human life brought to the reader." But how does one bring the "human life . . . to the reader" except in terms of the form? It cannot, apparently, be "brought" in chunks. (Even the extreme naturalist does not do that; he uses words, which imply some kind of selection, and which, as words, are finally symbols, not the objects themselves.) Moreover, *some* kind of interpretation is made—*some* kind of judgment. (Mr. Kazin nowhere in his book praises either the random accumulation of facts or surrealism.) Change the *way* a thing is said and you change *what* is said. Does Mr. Kazin actually believe that his "New Formalists" are interested in nonfunctional techniques—stanzaic patterns, rhyme schemes, alliteration—as absolutes and in isolation? One feels embarrassed at putting questions so elementary to Mr. Kazin, who is definitely not a fool. That he is not makes one ponder over what bias of mind can have concealed these matters from him, or—perhaps more pertinently—over whether Mr. Kazin has actually read the critics in question at all.

Consider for a moment Mr. Kazin's own procedure. I quote from his admirable passage on Steinbeck:

"In writers of a certain natural awkwardness, like Dreiser and Anderson, there is a sentimentality, an impurity, that follows from exaggeration and lack of control; but one is always conscious of the amplitude through which they move. Steinbeck is not awkward, no; but he is not ample. He is a simple writer who has acquired facility, but though he is restive in his simplicity, his imagination cannot rise above it. And it is that simplicity and facility, working together, a tameness of imagination operating slickly, that give his work its surface paradox of simplicity and trickiness, of integrity of emotion and endless contrivance of

means. This does not mean a lack of sincerity; it does mean that Steinbeck is not so simple that he does not know how to please; or to take, as it were, advantage of himself. It is, after all, the cunning behind the poignant situation in *Of Mice and Men*, a certain Woolcott-like ambush of the heartstrings, that makes his little fable meretricious in its pathos, a moment's gulp; and it is the same air of calculation in *The Moon is Down*, so much more glaring because of its subject, that makes this allegorical drama of the struggle of free men today merely depressing."

This appraisal, I think, is just, and it rests on distinctions which are sharp and shrewd; but they are not obvious distinctions—they have not been obvious to most critics; and they certainly involve a pretty complicated sense of form. How does Mr. Kazin know all this about Steinbeck? By intuition? By a psychoanalysis of Mr. Steinbeck's unconscious? By a socio-economic study of Mr. Steinbeck's environment? Or by making a rather careful "textual examination" of Steinbeck's work? Mr. Kazin's distinction between the artist's personal sincerity and a kind of "meretriciousness" in the pathos of the works themselves, if not a very subtle distinction, is at least one which implies that Mr. Kazin knows, when he wants to know, that the formal properties of a novel or a poem are important in building up or impairing "integrity of emotion." In the same way his phrase "air of calculation" implies that he has no illusion that the author simply dumps his messages on the table any sort of fashion; and, further, that something so difficult to get at as an "air of calculation" may disable, or even reverse, the obvious intent of something so plain as a political allegory.

Of course it is possible that Mr. Kazin's distaste for the "new formalists" springs simply from the fact that he does not like the terms which they use; or, since he is obviously an able and resourceful critic himself, that he prefers to make use of his own critical metaphors. This surmise is supported by Mr. Kazin's references to the influence of these critics upon the universities. (Mr. Kazin thus joins Van Wyck Brooks in taking the attitude that they are infecting universities. The charge is pathetic. He

has taken far too seriously the alarm of a few orthodox professors fearful of being disturbed at their footnotes. I can assure him personally that the new formalists have next to no influence in the universities.)

But further discussion of the nature of criticism is probably a waste of time. Mr. Kazin has very shrewdly foredamned all examination of the point at issue by assuming that serious discussion of it in itself involves an owlish and precious aestheticism—and indeed, an antidemocratic snobbery.

Suppose, then, that we waive the question of criticism and go on to examine Mr. Kazin's "America." After all, his book is advertised as "An interpretation of modern American prose *and experience*." If we take Mr. Kazin on his own terms, what sort of pattern do we get? We get some such pattern as this: When Van Wyck Brooks writes what Mr. Kazin admits is a sentimental life of Emerson, that is natural piety and worthy of praise. When Carl Sandburg writes a life of Lincoln, "the people's legend of him now seemed the greatest of all American works of art." But when Allen Tate writes a life of Stonewall Jackson, it is not an act of local piety, but "a literary apotheosis of the South." Any agrarian protests from the Middle West against the robber barons who had captured the peace after the Civil War evoke in Mr. Kazin a very sympathetic warmth. But a critique of American history which involves even qualified admiration for those agrarians who used rifles in their protest against the coming of the new order gets very short shrift from Mr. Kazin. And John Crowe Ransom's statement that "The South is unique on this continent for having founded and defended a culture which was according to the European principles of culture" falls on Mr. Kazin's ears very coldly.

New England's loss of authority after the Civil War and the break up of its civilization is, one gathers, a valid subject for study, and can be and has been more or less successfully referred to principles. But Faulkner's art represents the "agony" of Southern culture, and here no principles emerge at all for Mr. Kazin. He can see in it merely a "walking phantasmagoria," and

Faulkner represents "the perpetuation of a seemingly inveterate Southern romanticism."

Indeed, like the Russia of the Marxist critics, the South of the Southern critics "was a great literary myth, to be appreciated in its own terms only by the literary intelligence." Is Mr. Kazin's "America," too, a literary myth? Or is it somehow not a myth? What really happened "in those dark and still little-understood years of the 1880's and 1890's" in which Mr. Kazin says that our literature was rooted? Does Mr. Kazin understand what happened there? And what has been the essential nature of the America since 1890? Did Sinclair Lewis conjure his Babbitts out of a silk hat—or were they part of the fauna which he photographed? And do they still exist or, since Pearl Harbor, have they been exterminated? Was Van Wyck Brooks blind in his earlier period, and has he now recovered his eyesight, or has he simply become afraid of what he then saw and in personal terror repudiated that vision? Was Mencken's Booboisie actually there to be discerned by any sufficiently tough realist's glance, or was it an optical illusion, a malicious distortion, or was the Booboisie an amalgam of American fact and Menkenian prejudice? What is the essential nature of present-day America, and what is its relation to Mr. Kazin's myth? This is a question not the less complicated because it is tremendously important. And Mr. Kazin's book by implication gives an answer. But Mr. Kazin cannot discuss that answer, for the nature of myth and the senses in which it is true and its relations to "reality" are, like questions about literature, technical questions, questions that imply an Alexandrian coldness, an academic thinness of blood, a detachment and exclusiveness that suggests a contempt for democracy.

Mr. Kazin is for warmth and a fighting faith and a homespun simplicity. The times are too urgent to warrant our spending ourselves on the "luxury" which is criticism. Even the younger critics whom Mr. Kazin singles out for approval "continued to believe in criticism and to practise it—between times." What does the last phrase mean?—that even good criticism, as a luxury, should in these times, be indulged only occasionally and

sporadically? Or does he mean that the good critics have been tactful in limiting their critical writing now that "so many minds were dedicated to more imperative considerations"? Is it possible that the passage illuminates Mr. Kazin's real notions of the nature of literature, and indicates the discount which he puts upon it? If so, it is not so severe a discount as that which Herr Hitler places upon it, nor as that which Mr. Van Wyck Brooks placed upon it when he urged us to imitate the Nazis by burning those books which irritated him. Mr. Kazin does not go so far; he implies only a discreet program of voluntary birth control.

"A planet locked in war," he says, "had no place for" the "criticism that had been launched with so many quaking hopes and ardors in the early thirties." It might have been more effectively damning, on the whole, to say that an intelligent world has no room for bad criticism, ever. But Mr. Kazin may be right. Perhaps we do get the most rigorous sifting of criticism only when we think with our blood. In any case, Mr. Kazin is entitled to all the benefits of the proposition. The "planet locked in war," at least that area of it dominated by literary New York, will, one confidently predicts, find a place for *On Native Grounds*.

by Stuart Gerry Brown

SOME POEMS OF LOUIS MACNEICE

I

IT is now some seven or eight years since the critics heralded the appearance of a "new generation" of English poets who offered hope because they were "moving forward," while the earlier hope, Mr. T. S. Eliot, was "moving backward" and could not be expected to contribute anything further of more than minor significance. The chief luminaries among these poets were W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, and C. Day Lewis. The critics who claimed a passionate devotion to "art" as their only bias found that Auden, Spender, and Lewis were in "the tradition," that they were like Donne, that they were not like Keats, or Arnold, or Walter de la Mare, that they had mastered the techniques of wit and symbolism and were rejuvenating an English poetry which had become stale and decadent; while the critics whose primary concern was with "social significance" found that Auden, Spender, and Lewis were showing the way to a poetry which bore an "organic relationship" to the class struggle in its current manifestation—the great "popular front" movement which was sweeping the world toward collective security and peaceful transformation to socialism. It is interesting to observe, in this connection, that the departure of Mr. Lewis from the public notice coincides remarkably with the signing of the German-Russian agreement in the summer of 1939. Mr. Spender's political manifesto, *Forward from Liberalism*, seems now to have been ill advised, and indeed only Mr. Auden, who has taken up American residence, seems able to hold the center of the stage.

In the midst of the fuss and fanfare one occasionally heard the name of Louis MacNeice, as collaborator with Auden perhaps, or as a member of the group of "rising young Oxford poets,"

but rarely as a poet of comparable importance with the others. Most recently he has been honored by Mr. David Daiches, who finds that MacNeice is a "good poet" but that a study of his work will not reveal anything about "modern poetry" which is not better illustrated by Auden or Spender, or, especially, by Lewis.

In the latter judgment I suspect that Daiches is right. In fact it is possible that he is more than right. It is possible that "modern poetry" is something in Daiches' head and in the heads of other critics who concern themselves, often brilliantly, with defining it, defending it, sometimes writing it, and excluding Mr. MacLeish from it because he writes "parodies" of himself. I have no wish to intrude upon this criticism. I admire it; I hope I have profited by studying it; but I have not learned what "modern poetry" is. And I have nothing to contribute to the discussion. But I have come to enjoy a few poems of Spender and Lewis thoroughly, several of Auden, and some six or eight of MacNeice, with which I wish to deal in these notes because they seem to me to communicate experiences more fully and sharply realized than do most contemporary poems. It still seems to me that good poems are worth reading for their own sake, whether they are in "the tradition" or fit the definitions of "modern poetry" or not. And I do not believe that fitting the definition of "modern poetry" or being in "the tradition" will determine the merits of a poem.

II

MacNeice has himself written a book called *Modern Poetry*. But it is not primarily a critical argument, or even a defense of his friends. It is about his personal feelings, life, interest in poems and how they are written. It is diffuse and perceptive, and not always logically reasoned. I think it is a good book. In it he says that he "would have a poet able-bodied, fond of talking, a reader of the newspapers, capable of pity and laughter, informed in economics, appreciative of women, involved in personal relationships, actively interested in politics, susceptible to

physical impression." This is a pretty fair description of himself as you find his interests reflected in his poems, for he has written into his poems experiences which sprang from nearly all these qualities.

He has, for example, written two or three of the best love poems we have had since Arnold or Meredith. It is to be regretted, I think, that preoccupation with history, politics, and aesthetics has tended in recent years to hinder poets from writing love poems; we have certainly had remarkably few of them. At any rate such poems as *Leaving Barra* or the sonnet *You who will soon be unrecapturable* are sharply defined, even exciting experiences. And both show MacNeice at his best for sound, image, and sense of structure.

Leaving Barra begins with a striking visual image which the reader needs to retain in his imagination as a kind of background for the whole experience and in order to feel the unity and logic of the poem's structure. Otherwise it will seem too deliberate.

The dazzle on the sea, my darling,
Leads from the western channel
A carpet of brilliance taking
My leave for ever of the island.

The splitting of "for ever" into two words emphasizes the sense of finality which the poet feels upon leaving the island (one of the Hebrides) where he has been especially impressed by the "easy tempo" of life. The experience moves forward with a witty image which likens the poet in his "scuffle for scraps of notice" to "gulls on the wing for garbage." And now the reader moves with the poet, in the next several stanzas, through a kind of fretful meditation in which the contemporary dilemma of finding peace in a world where there are no fixed values is squarely faced. "Restless as a gull and haunted/By a hankering after Atlantis," the reader is made to feel the poet's "hunger." The center of the experience now is the hunger: for peace requires that it be crushed. But that kind of peace would be impossibly negative "Like a fool or a dog or a buddha;" and, in any case, it is only honest to admit that "I would cherish existence/Loving the beast

and the bubble." The negative side of the meditation, the possibilities which flow from denial of the hunger, is sharply stopped by a judicious use of a traditional image, "And when we agree in denial/The cock crows in the morning." And now the repeated word "morning" carries the reader into the positive side of the experience, for there is an "inkling" of the solution to be found in:

The beauty of the moon and music,
The routine courage of the worker,
The gay endurance of women. . . .

The function of these lines is to provide an "objective correlative" for the positive feeling, the feeling of coming out of the slump which began with leaving the "easy tempo" of the island. And the repeated word "women" brings the experience to its completion, for it suggests the particular "inkling" which, the reader now understands, provided the impulsion for the whole poem and closes the gap between the experience and the image of the sea with which the poem begins.

And you who to me among women
Stand for so much that I wish for,
I thank you, my dear, for the example
Of living in tune and moving.

For few are able to keep moving,
They drag and flag in the traffic;
While you are alive beyond question
Like the dazzle on the sea, my darling.

No doubt a certain surface pleasure is to be had from the pattern of the poem. The stanzas are tightly knit; and the device of repeating the last word of each stanza as the end word of the first line in the next holds the whole poem neatly together. But this is not really to read the poem at all. The pattern is the pattern, or better, structure, of an experience and has no life independent of the experience. Unless the reader actually re-creates the experience the structure may even seem too deliberate, too "artificial."

The stock response to "dazzle," "bubble," et cetera is negative. We have always been taught by the poets and philosophers that

we should be wary of these things. Yet the essence of this experience is a kind of wilful acceptance of things ephemeral, the finding of "inklings" of good and of value in the flux itself. The poet is not feeling as he *ought* to feel; he is feeling as he *does* feel. The poem, this is to say, is honest. And I should doubt whether anyone but a fool or a buddha is likely to be unmoved by it.

The sonnet *You who will soon be unrecapturable*, of which I have spoken, needs to be quoted entire:

You who will soon be unrecapturable,
You with your flair for spotted scarves and checks,
The creed I built upon your charm and sex
And *laissez-faire* I find no longer tenable;
But as the loitering senses are incapable
To hold the blend of smells or light in flecks
So knowing you whom no one could annex
Was no more durable than those are durable;
Which is why your trek to not-believed-in lands
Has dislocated the day and quenched the sun
That licked the cornice of my lonely room
Settling now to a grey and reasoned gloom
Where I shall neither recant the minutes gone
Nor fumble for the past with backward hands.

The "plain sense" of this poem defies prose paraphrase, for such a sentence as "I shall soon lose you, but I shall not allow myself to regret it," is singularly unrewarding. Yet if the imagination of the reader succeeds in re-creating the experience which the poem communicates, it will be found to be singularly rich. The rhyme scheme is "Italian," but the structure of the poem is so clearly unified that it scarcely resembles the Italian pattern at all. The first four lines are images which suggest the quality of the woman who will soon be "unrecapturable," while "flair," "charm," and "creed" suggest the quality of the relationship between the protagonist and the woman. "*Laissez-faire*" and "no longer tenable" summarize the feeling which has given the poem its initial impulsion, and now the quality is communicated directly by the extraordinary image which compares the incapability of the "loitering senses" with the limitations of "knowing you."

But this feeling is now drawn into the context of the concluding six lines. The "trek to not-believed-in lands" which "has

dislocated the day and quenched the sun" brings home to the reader's imagination a sudden sense of the smashing of a pattern, the collapse of an illusion; but the feeling of the first eight lines must be held and brought into relation with this new intellectual realization. Otherwise the effectiveness of "reasoned gloom" will be lost, the last two lines will be taken as statement rather than hope. If the two feelings are held in the imagination simultaneously the poet will have succeeded in communicating his central experience which is a state of vital tension between intellectual disillusionment and emotional attachment.

This tension, communicated through the sequence of images and the contradictory feeling they produce, is not unlike the tension which marks the central experience of a number of Shakespeare's most memorable sonnets. And, again like Shakespeare, it is the integrity of the experience, the perfect dependence of each image upon the whole poem, which helps to make the poem memorable. The experience is "personal" in the sense that it obviously belongs to some particular situation or relationship; but it is "impersonal" because the tension, which is its central characteristic, is immediately recognized by a sensitive reader as a recurring element of human experience. And there is no submerging of the self in emotion; the emotion is objectified by the correlative images (to borrow Mr. Eliot's very useful terms again). Beside MacNeice's poem the much admired sonnets of Millay or many of the earlier masters seem thin and watery.

III

In the "Foreword" to his *Poems 1925-1940* MacNeice says that he considers his *Autumn Journal*, "the long topical poem I wrote in the Fall of 1938," as "in a sense, a failure; it fails in depth." And he adds, "We shall not be capable of depth—of tragedy or great poetry—until we have made sense of our world." I am not sure that we ought to accept this judgment; I am not sure that the "great" poems of the world are necessarily the work of poets who have made sense of their world, or even always of their ex-

perience. Such very different poems as *Othello* and *The Waste Land*, I should say, owe something of their "greatness" to the fact that they do not "make sense." While, on the other hand, the "greatness" of the *Divina Commedia* or *Paradise Lost* does not merely depend upon the poet's having imposed a water-tight system upon the data of experience. At any rate there are two or three lyrics in *Autumn Journal* which are honest and moving and skillfully executed.

A fair number of our more sensitive poets, during the last fifty years or so, have felt a need to deal with the meaning of the Christ in a world which has largely forgotten His faith. The best of these poems are angry poems, or ironical poems: Francis Thompson's *The Kingdom of God*, Houseman's *The Carpenter's Son* and *Easter Hymn*, Millay's *To Jesus on His Birthday*, and Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*. In the second part of poem No. XX in *Autumn Journal* MacNeice has written a lyric which belongs in this tradition and which is at least as good as any of them. The experience takes its impulsion from the approach of Christmas,

... cards of snow and holly,
Gimcracks in the shops,
Wishes and memories wrapped in tissue paper,
Trinkets, gadgets and lollipops.

And then the memory of Christmas in childhood "Waking in the morning to the rustling of paper," which is felt now as "a coral island in time where we land and eat our lotus/But where we can never stay." This contradiction leads to a clearly experienced perception of what Henry Adams called "the two thousand years' failure of Christianity," written into a passage of angry and ironical seriousness that does not seem to me precisely to lack depth":

There was a star in the East, the magi in their turbans
Brought their luxury toys
In homage to a child born to capsize their values
And wreck their equipoise.
A smell of hay like peace in the dark stable—
Not peace however but a sword
To cut the Gordian knot of logical self-interest,
The fool-proof golden cord;

For Christ walked in where no philosopher treads
But armed with more than folly,
Making the smooth place rough and knocking the heads
Of Church and State together.
In honour of whom we have taken over the pagan
Saturnalia for our annual treat
Letting the belly have its say, ignoring
The spirit while we eat.
And Conscience still goes crying through the desert
With sackcloth round his loins:
A week to Christmas—hark the herald angels
Beg for copper coins.

In a way this is light verse; in another way it is angry, even bitter, verse. It is not Christian poetry, poetry springing from belief in the Christian myth, but it is not "separated from all belief." The numerous echoes of familiar lines of older poets and passages from the New Testament make the poem almost a parody on one level; but they serve a double function. On another level they suggest that there has been a tradition of belief in the world. Men have, at times, made sense of life and written of life nobly; and, it follows, there is still nourishment to be found in the meaning of the birth of Christ. The experience of the poem lies not in the discovery of such meaning, but in the feeling that such meaning is there to be discovered, has always been there, and has never been fully discovered. For "Conscience still goes crying through the desert."

The poem is rich in what Mr. Allen Tate calls "tension," and it suggests, to me at least, a great passage of Nashe which Mr. Tate offers as one of his touchstones:

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour;
Brightness falls from the air,
Queens have died young and fair,
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy upon us!

Nashe was writing in an age when failure was failure among men of faith; MacNeice is writing in an age when failure is failure even in faith. And for this reason there is a bitter anger in the contemporary poem which is wholly lacking in the old one. Yet

the tension which marks a finely achieved poem seems to me equally present in both.

The concluding poem of *Autumn Journal* is uneven: some of it is overdone and some of it is little more than didactic prose. And it is too long, in any case, to deal with here. But there are things in it which I cannot forbear calling attention to. The structure of the poem is simple: a long series of images of continuity and regeneration within the framework of exhortations to sleep is followed by an exhortation to dream, not of a land "where all the milk is cream/And all the girls are willing", but "earnest of the real Future when we wake." In the first part of the poem I am particularly struck by the continuity and efficiency of this sequence of images:

Sleep, my fathers, in your graves
On upland bogland under heather;
What the wind scatters the wind saves,
A sapling springs in a new country.
Time is a country, the present moment
A spotlight roving round the scene;
We need not chase the spotlight,
The future is the bride of what has been.

Later, in the dream, I am struck by this:

And pray for a possible land
Not of sleep-walkers, not of angry puppets,
But where both heart and brain can understand
The movements of our fellows;
Where life is a choice of instruments and none
Is debarred his natural music,
Where the waters of life are free of the ice-blockade of hunger. . . .

There is again in these passages that keenly felt tension of which I have spoken. The image of the spotlight and the country, for example, is ambivalent but not confused. The further one follows its implications the clearer it becomes. And notice that it is, on the rhetorical level, simply a mixed metaphor. The image of the ice-blockade completes another mixed metaphor. But its meanings are so controlled by the context that the rules of rhetoric are only irrelevant. It is a pity that the whole poem does not move on this level; but one can forgive much for the richness of these lines.

In my concluding note I should like to call attention to certain qualities of the long poem called *The Hebrides*. Like *Leaving Barra* this is one of several poems which have their impulsion in MacNeice's experience of the life and country of the Hebrides. But it is more deeply rooted in that experience than the other poems are. On one plane it is topical and descriptive of the life on the islands where "the feet of the peasant years/Pad up and down their sentry-beat not challenging/Any comer for the password." The quality of daily life is directly communicated to the reader whose imagination is awake, fishing, farming, singing, marrying, caring for the peat fires, through images which make judicious use of words which belong to the islands:

The boys go poaching their ancestral rights—
The Ossianic salmon who take the yellow
Tilt of the river with a magnet's purpose—
And listen breathless to the tales at the ceilidh
Among the peat-smoke and the smells of dung
That fill the felted room from the cave of the byre.

But the poem is much more than an excellent piece of descriptive verse. It is a poem. That is to say, the sequential images of life on the islands make the formula of a unified experience. As in many of MacNeice's poems it is an experience of contrast, of tension. On the one hand is the "easy tempo" of the islands, forming the explicit substance of the poem. But the meaning of the islands is found in the implied contrast with life down in the bustling world, London, New York, Birmingham, or wherever:

For on those islands
Where a few surnames cover a host of people
And the art of being a stranger with your neighbour
Has still to be imported, death is still
No lottery ticket in a public lottery—
The result to be read on the front page of a journal—
But a family matter near to the whole family.

But the Hebrides is no land of escape. MacNeice is not one of the deluded shepherds in his *Eclogue by a Five-Barred Gate*. In fact it is precisely because he not only finds the meaningless haste of his world unsatisfactory but is unwilling to retreat into

the past or into dreams that his poems are marked by that vital tension which gives them their special quality of excellence.

On those islands
Where no trains run on rails and the tyrant time
Has no clock-towers to signal people to doom
With semaphor ultimatums tick by tick,
There is still peace though not for me and not
Perhaps for long—still peace on the bevel hills
For those who still can live as their fathers lived
On those islands.

I would add only that *The Hebrides* is written in a blank verse which for flexibility and harmony not incompatible with rugged and muscular syntax seems to me superior to any we have had in a very long time. This passage, for example:

On those islands
The fish come singing from the drunken sea,
The herring rush the gunwhales and sort themselves
To cram the expectant barrels of their own accord—
Or such is the dream of the fisherman whose wet
Leggings hang on the door as he sleeps returned
From a night when miles of net were drawn up empty.

Or this:

And while the stories circulate like smoke,
The sense of life spreads out from the one-eyed house
In wider circles through the lake of night
In which articulate man has dropped a stone—
In wider circles round the black-faced sheep,
Wider and fainter till they hardly crease
The ebony heritage of the herded dead.

by Roy P. Basler

CHRISTABEL

I

IT has always seemed to me that Samuel Taylor Coleridge intended *Christabel* to be a medieval romance of innocent love hedged about by dark workings of the imagination and confused by the inscrutable power of sexual necessity which motivates not only the main action of the plot but also the devious, perverse counter-action and the sinister sub-actions in so far as they can be determined from the two parts of the poem which he actually completed. It has also seemed to me that the machinery of folklore, superstition, vampirism, and witchcraft, which revolves around the person of Geraldine, though entirely in keeping with the medieval background of the poem, is intended by Coleridge to be understood by mature readers as the romantic veil which "covers but does not hide" the realistic psycho-emotional theme.

Since this point of view is related to a theory or interpretation of folkstory and fairytale, perhaps that theory should be stated. Medieval romance and balladry are much preoccupied with the mystery of human emotion in general, but particularly they are riddled with the mystery of sex as a powerful and inscrutable force which drives men and women into irrational emotional situations and strange actions almost beyond human comprehension. In attempting to deal with this phenomenon of sexual necessity, the folk utilized in song and story the preternatural realm of witchcraft and fairylore to account for the omnipresent mystery. It is no accident that the modern meanings of *enchanting, charming, bewitching, et cetera* have usually an association

(in describing women at least) with sexual attractiveness, for such association is plainly inherent in the words down through the years. That Coleridge recognized the sexual significance of such words is obvious from the fact that he admitted being "bewitched" in the sexual sense as early as 1794, but more to the point in view of this study is the penetrating comment which he made in a letter to Washington Allston in 1815 that "The malignant witchcraft of evil passions reads good men's prayers backwards!" Furthermore, the notorious enchantresses and witches of ancient and medieval legend were almost invariably young and beautiful, though they were often represented as merely appearing so, while in their essential nature they were wrinkled hags, hideous monsters, or half-beast-half-human creatures. So also, the vampires of Balkan superstition have a quasi-sexual motivation in that they were constrained to attack those whom they had loved most while living, and the Lamia myth is hardly veiled in its sexual allusion. This theme of sexual enchantment was certainly recognized by Coleridge, as it was by Keats (*Lamia* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*); for he used it specifically in *The Three Graves* and *The Ballad of the Dark Ladie*, and incidentally in the poem *Love*, and alluded to it in the "woman wailing for her demon lover" in *Kubla Khan*—all of which poems were begun in 1797-98, contemporaneously with *Christabel*. In his prefatory note to *The Three Graves* Coleridge specified that his study of accounts of Oby witchcraft as practiced in the West Indies was responsible for the idea of the poem, and indicated that the sinister power of passion was adopted in lieu of witchcraft with "the design of showing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning."

These mysterious creatures of the folk imagination are sometimes, but not always, represented in story as supernatural beings. Quite often, however, the representation is that they are themselves bewitched, and derive their traits and powers from a

previous enchantment laid on them by a similar creature. In medieval legend, even when a supernatural origin of the enchantment is observed, it is fairly obvious that no concept of deity is involved. The source is not "above" nature as such, but "beyond" or "underlying" nature. Perhaps the coming of Christianity to the pagan world accounts for this apparent dichotomy in the medieval mythology, which separated the powers "above" from those "below" the merely earthly—the old pagan mythology sometimes holding on, as for example in the Tannhäuser legend, as an interpretation of sexual necessity, madness, hysteria, and psychological and physiological seizures in general. Chaucer's Wife of Bath opined sardonically that "limitours and othere holy freres" were responsible for the disappearance of fairies—

For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walkest now the limitour himself

Wommen may go saufly up and doun,
In every bush, or under every tree.
Ther is noon other incubus but he,
And he ne wol doun hem but dishonour.

At any rate, the treatment of the witch-woman, the mermaid, the fay, the lamia, and the vampire in folkstory generally observes something other than a strictly supernatural origin for their powers. It is my belief that Coleridge had in mind not only this body of folklore and legend, with its underlying sexual mystery and suggestion, but also this distinction of the "prenatural" source of the mystery, when he specified in a letter to Thomas Poole that *Christabel* was a poem of the "prenatural" as distinguished from his poem of the "supernatural," *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

In an intensive and largely authoritative study of *Christabel*, *The Road to Tryermaine* (Chicago, 1936), Professor Arthur H. Nethercot dismisses the sexual theme with a passing nod of acquaintance but without giving it the benefit of analysis, although he recognizes that a number of critics have detected such a theme from the date of the poem's publication. Detection of this theme was the occasion for contemporary criticism of the

poem on grounds of obscenity, and furnished, as Professor Nethercot shows, the motivation of several parodies and "continuations." It is interesting that Coleridge took notice of the implication of obscenity in a curious letter to William Blackwood, tacitly admitting the grounds for satire on the sexual theme of *Christabel*, so long as no questions involving personal turpitude were raised, and again in a letter to Robert Southey, merely shrugged off a vicious anonymous criticism in the *Edinburgh Review* which he attributed to William Hazlitt. In neither instance did Coleridge deny the sexual theme, though he was obviously desirous of avoiding personal calumny brought on by recognition of it. We need not be concerned here with the question of obscenity. No doubt those who find the suggestion of sexual mystery in *Christabel* to be obscene would also condemn on the same grounds a large portion of the myth, folklore, balladry, and legend which furnished the background of Coleridge's romance. What we are concerned with is the question: Does what Professor Nethercot calls "the sexual interpretation" of *Christabel* furnish a tenable—perhaps the most tenable—and coherent reading of the poem from an aesthetic point of view?

The primary elements of plot structure developed in the two parts of the poem which Coleridge completed indicate such a theme clearly. These elements show that Christabel is the principal character (if the title does not!); that the main action is concerned as a whole with her passionate though thwarted love for her absent "betrothed knight"; that the complicating action is the preternatural psycho-emotional influence of Geraldine, who entrances Christabel body and soul and enchants Christabel's father as a necessary step in effecting the continuation of Christabel's entrancement; and that the counter-action on a supernatural plane, which presents the spirit of Christabel's mother hovering over the distressed girl and appearing to her in two visions in order to thwart the malign influence of Geraldine, is insufficient alone to free Christabel from the preternatural entrancement.

The elements of plot which are clearly forecast for later de-

velopment in the unfinished remainder of the poem show that Christabel is to be freed from the entrancement—

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison—

and that there is to be a wedding, as prophesied by Christabel's mother on her death bed—

I have heard the grey-haired fair tell
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike upon my wedding-day.

That Coleridge had not only the plot outlined fully in mind, but also the approximate length of the poem, is indicated by his comment in 1800 that it had "swelled into a poem of 1400 lines" and again in 1815 that it "will be 5 Books."

II

If sexual necessity and the emotional complex, inscrutable and dark in their mystery, illusionment, and power to "transform" mortals, underlie many of the folktales and literary adaptations which furnish the prototypes of Geraldine and Christabel, then Coleridge's use of them in the several poems mentioned heretofore would seem to indicate clearly enough his perception of the theme and his willingness to use it with the customary man and woman sexual relationship. In *Christabel*, however, he ventured into dangerous though fascinating territory by making Geraldine apparently a woman (with a hint of the androgynous) and thus giving the theme an added "turn of the screw," which would effect a situation even more capable of wringing the last drop of mystery, suggestion, and horror from an old device. In this he anticipated Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*, which likewise utilizes the theme of sexual necessity and perversion for developing a psychologically realistic ghost story of two children "haunted" by the evil spirits of two deceased servants who had perverted their innocence through sexual "enchantment."

Let us examine the situation with which Coleridge begins,

follow the actions of Christabel and Geraldine, and seek for the meaning of certain passages. Christabel is presented as a young and beautiful girl deeply in love with and pining for her absent betrothed. She has had disturbing and vivid dreams of him which arouse her fears for his safety. For a reason not specifically stated, though there is the obvious hint of pagan superstition, she goes into the forest at midnight to pray for him beneath "the huge oak tree" with its "rarest mistletoe." One presumes that Coleridge deliberately uses the definite article in designating *the tree*, in order to suggest specific association of the tree and its preternaturally significant mistletoe with Christabel's immediate purpose of praying for "her lover that's far away." Anyone familiar with folklore is aware of the significance of the oak with its mistletoe; and that the "midnight wood" is the appropriate place for such rites, as well as for making the acquaintance of preternatural creatures, is amply recorded in both ancient myth and medieval legend.

Into this situation appears the beautiful but sinister Geraldine. She claims to have been kidnapped by "five warriors" who after a furious ride covering at least part of two days and an intervening night released her "underneath this oak." In a voice "faint and sweet" she asks Christabel's pity on her "sore distress," with the specific request that Christabel "stretch forth" her hand "and help a wretched maid to flee." The reader is made aware of a peculiar faintness in Geraldine, which at first perhaps suggests that she is suffering from exceedingly great fatigue, but which with later developments may seem to have been the first steps toward fulfilling her desire for physical contact with Christabel, on which Coleridge insists with good authority. Geraldine is merely beginning to effect the familiarity of touch which culminates in her taking Christabel in her arms in bed and working "a spell" over her. This action Coleridge later apostrophizes in the "Conclusion to Part I" with these lines:

O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will! . . .

Accompanying these advances are various mysterious manifestations which suggest that all is not well with Geraldine. Some of these seem little more than mysterious portents of evil based on popular superstitions: namely, the moaning of the mastiff bitch, the animal-like shining of Geraldine's eyes in the dark, and the flaring of the brand in the dying fire as she passes. But in her strange weakness of body at the threshold one perceives the suggestion that Geraldine cannot gain her ends without the assistance of the innocent Christabel herself. The old belief that an evil and (or) preternatural spirit could not enter a dwelling which had been properly blessed by Christian rites except when brought in through mortal aid has an obvious psychological, if not a moral, implication in the story. Likewise, Geraldine's apparent inability to pray to the Virgin and her strange faintness when she observes the carven angel in the bedchamber suggest the essential weakness of evil and preternatural creatures in the presence of prayer or a symbol of divine power, which is again authoritative use of medieval belief. These suggestions reach their climax in the dire struggle between Geraldine and the hovering spirit of Christabel's mother, in which Geraldine temporarily gains possession of the girl.

Thus far the suggestions have been fairly vague, but no doubt has been left that Christabel, all innocently but deliberately, has brought into her bedchamber, not merely a beautiful woman, but a preternatural creature with strange powers and stranger characteristics, and that the creature's designs are in conflict with all that is good and holy. But then, amazingly, Geraldine speaks the following lines:

All they who live in the upper sky.
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befel,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

These lines do not necessarily imply that Geraldine is hypocritically pretending piety and an association of holy purposes with

her designs, though they may be so interpreted. Rather, they simply state Geraldine's recognition of Christabel's essential goodness and "difference" in nature, her gratefulness for the good fortune of being befriended by Christabel, and her willingness to try to requite the girl well in so far as her preternatural compunction permits; and her prayer is a genuine plea for success in what she is constrained to do, though it is not necessarily addressed to those "who live in the upper sky." Geraldine's apparent hope is that through Christabel she will derive some influence which will effect a "transformation" in her own nature, which, as one observes in the next passage in the poem, would be highly desirable. The ancient, and to some extent modern, superstitions concerning the magic potency of sexual contact with youth and beauty in rejuvenating the elderly, curing illness, and remedying all sorts of deficiencies, are so well known that it seems hardly necessary to labor over the authority in folklore for Geraldine's anticipation.

At this point it becomes clear why Coleridge stated, as recorded by Thomas Allsop, that while writing *Christabel* he had certain lines of Crashaw's *Hymn to Saint Teresa* in mind, "if, indeed, by some subtle process of the mind they did not suggest the first thought of the whole poem." The gist of the passage in Crashaw's poem which Allsop cites is that the devout Teresa is bent on bringing "Christ's name" to the Moores in order to effect her own martyrdom in emulation of Christ:

Since 'tis not to be had at home,
She'll travail to a martyrdome.

As Teresa would go to the Moores, Christabel goes into the forest—the traditional domain of preternatural creatures and pagan gods—and as Teresa would become a martyr for her love of Christ, Christabel becomes a quasi-martyr for love of her knight "that's far away." As Teresa would offer herself to the Moores to die for her love, so Christabel offers herself to the preternatural powers, but not necessarily to die for her love—after all, Coleridge was not writing a saint's legend, but a ro-

mance, and complete martyrdom for the "lovely lady" would have been both illogical and unnecessary.

Linked with this idea of martyrdom is the possibility of Geraldine's deriving some "good" from Christabel by means of a "transformation" in her nature. The parallel with Teresa is again obvious: as the Moores might derive a spiritual "transformation" or salvation from Teresa, so Geraldine might derive a kind of salvation from Christabel. But in either case, this eventuality is of less importance than the martwrdom itself. What both Teresa and Christabel are desirous of achieving is a trial or test of love, through adoration of the loved one, and where Teresa's is a purely spiritual love, Christabel's is a sexual (albeit "romantic") love for her knight. The question concerning the effect of Christabel's mission on the preternatural creatures of the wood—to wit, Geraldine—we cannot know certainly, for Coleridge did not complete what he had begun; but if he had followed Crashaw's "first thought," we may be sure that he would not have been concerned with Geraldine except as an agent for effecting the trial of Christabel's love. Either he would present Christabel's innocence and beauty destroyed for love (a pointless martyrdom in a romance), or he would present a limited martyrdom with a final rescue, which would be entirely in keeping with the traditional pattern of folkstory and legend as well as with psychological reality.

There is the didactic interpretation of this possibility which both Derwent Coleridge and Dr. James Gillman put forth: namely, that the vicarious suffering of Christabel is for the redemption of her lover, who is in some unspecified manner sinful and in need of grace, rather than for the redemption of Geraldine. I find nothing in the poem to substantiate the idea. Furthermore, this view violates the parallel with Teresa's love of Christ and wish for martyrdom for his sake. Nethercot, following Derwent Coleridge, misinterprets Crashaw's poem, as well as *Christabel*, for Crashaw's "first thought" is not that Teresa will atone for the sins of the pagan Moores (and certainly not for the sins of her Christ!), but that she will because of her love of Christ

emulate his suffering and death. The psychology of martyrdom, which was clear to Crashaw, was apparently not understood by Derwent Coleridge. Crashaw leaves no doubt that the main motive is martyrdom for Christ's sake, and immolation of pure love, with the salvation of the Moores a merely secondary consideration.

It is, of course, possible that Coleridge may have intended to bring about Geraldine's "transformation" from an evil to a good being, and to develop a moral theme of goodness suffering for the salvation of the wicked. His practice in other poems, however, would seem to indicate that he would merely utilize the moral theme in developing the aesthetic pattern of the story, as he did, for example, in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. It is true that the legend of Lamia as given by Burton in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* recognizes the possibility of an evil ophidian creature being transformed through love. Keats' *Lamia* fully develops the idea that Lamia may not be an essentially evil being bent on seducing the youth Lycius, but may be herself entranced and placed under an evil compunction which may be removed by the unquestioning and innocent love of the young man. This theme of true love overcoming evil enchantment (which is merely a polite version of the more vulgar superstitions concerning the potency of sexual contact for producing physical miracles) is common in numerous folktales and ballads such as *Beauty and the Beast* and *Kemp Owyne*, but though it would work well enough in effecting the rescue of Christabel from Geraldine's enchantment, it could not well apply to the possible rescue of Geraldine from a hypothetical previous enchantment laid on her by another creature; for the folktale tradition, as well as medieval theology and morality, would have been against it. The fundamental distinction between the human and the preternatural is usually absolute in folkstory, and as such is generally recognized in literary adaptations, whether the poet be Shakespeare (*The Tempest* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Matthew Arnold (*The Forsaken Merman*), or Coleridge. Likewise, the fundamental distinction between the essentially good and the

essentially evil is absolute in orthodox theology and morality. Though appearances may vary to the extent of a "good" being seeming to be "evil" or an "evil" being seeming to be "good," no essentially evil being can change essence and become good, except, of course, through divine election. If Geraldine is essentially both a preternatural creature and an evil being, her nature is unalterably fixed in both characters, however much she may strive through her magic of enchantment to transform her essence. This theme is reluctantly followed by Keats (after Burton) when he makes the illusion of Lamia's goodness and beauty vanish as her essential nature is exposed by the rationalism of the philosopher Appolonius. Only in the instance of an essentially good being who is merely suffering an evil enchantment—again recall *Kemp Owyne or Beauty and the Beast*—may the power of innocent and true love be of any efficacy. Chaucer's *The Tale of the Wyf of Bath* is an exception to the usual treatment. Significantly, however, the Wife of Bath is garbling a folktale, as well as orthodox morality, in order to spin a love parable to her own liking. According to her version, not true-love, but submission, works the miracle of transformation, and the wrinkled hag becomes "as fair to sene/As any lady" regardless of preternatural or moral antecedents.

To continue with our story, following Geraldine's prayer, pretended or actual, Christabel with thoughts of "weal and woe" watches the lady disrobe, and observes the deformity of "her bosom and half her side." The passage which follows requires no psychiatrist to reveal its psychological implications. The psycho-emotional impasse of "Desire with loathing strangely mixed" is portrayed with specific realism. Aware of her own "sorrow and shame," fearing repulse and failure, agonizing alternately between abasement and pride, but constrained by preternatural necessity, Geraldine lies down in appropriately medieval nudity and takes the equally naked Christabel in her arms to work the "enchantment":

Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly, as one defied,
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the Maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah wel-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
'In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair;
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.'

The trance into which Christabel then passes in Geraldine's embrace, and in which she continues through "The Conclusion to Part I," is very specifically connected with the prayer which she had said under the oak, when she was completely "resigned to bliss or bale." Clearly, Christabel did not go to the oak unaware of the risk she ran, and Coleridge emphasizes the connection as well as the contrast between the prayer scene and the trance scene. The trance is vividly and realistically described in the following lines:

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?

The essence of these vividly suggestive lines seems to be but poorly understood either as childish fear or merely magic spell cast by a merely mythical vampire. Like the preceding passage describing Geraldine's desire, it is too realistic psychologically, and Coleridge's apostrophe to shame and sorrow and the broken reference to the nature of Christabel's dream are too specifically vague, under the circumstances described, for one to avoid an

erotic implication. What else, may one ask, could Coleridge have expected his reader to infer? Surely not Professor Nethercot's merely sanguinary vampire! And yet the preliminary emphasis on physical contact and the culminating embrace make equally difficult one's acceptance of any purely psychic variety of vampirism. If Coleridge had meant this passage to suggest either, he need certainly have been at no pains to emphasize the "sorrow and shame" of the circumstance, or to use such a phrase as "Thou'st had thy will," or to have described Christabel's "after-rest" as she

Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Even if one presumes that Coleridge might have composed such a passage as "The Conclusion to Part I" without awareness of any sexual suggestion in it, one cannot well imagine a mind so keenly receptive to suggestive language perusing the phraseology unaware of the concupiscence of human imagination—in which case he would necessarily have revised his language unless content that the suggestion remain. None of his revisions indicate that he desired to avoid the suggestion at any point in the poem, though one of them, to be noticed presently, did remove an unsavory detail from a particular image.

In spite of the sorrow and shame to Christabel, what has happened to Geraldine?

And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

And on the following morning, as she first appears to Christabel, Geraldine is even more beautiful than on the night before, but in a specific detail which Coleridge almost italicizes, as it were, her figure has become more distinctly feminine. Her breasts seem to swell and

... her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.

Here is a physiological detail which is important because it cannot be satisfactorily accounted for except we assume that Geraldine is undergoing in body a "transformation" that symbolizes a change in her inner being. In the early manuscript version of the poem, Coleridge had described her bosom as "lean and old and foul of hue." Although he later deleted this line and substituted the vaguer but more effective "A sight to dream of, not to tell"; he failed to delete the specific reference in "Part II" which suggests that this physiological deficiency is being fully remedied under the transforming power of Christabel's embrace. Now, Professor Nethercot would have it that this is simply the revitalizing of a shrunken vampire who has no particular sexual significance, but it seems strange that Coleridge should have at first included a line which suggests so specifically a lack of feminine character, and then portrayed this deficiency as being remedied through Christabel's embrace, unless he expected the inference to be drawn that the transformation symbolized something essentially sexual in Geraldine's mystery. In short, it seems too difficult to suppose that Coleridge was unaware of the sexual implications of Geraldine, when one considers that it would have been the very one uppermost in the mind of any reader cognizant of the traditionally sexual mystery of vampires, lamias, mermaids, fairies, elves, and witch-women in general.

III

In "Part II" of *Christabel* the complicating action of the plot enters a new phase. As Geraldine becomes more lovely and loses something of the physical appearance of her "sorrow and shame," Christabel begins to manifest certain ophidian characteristics under the influence of the spell. The occurrence of these traits is understood, however, merely as the outward symbolizing of the inner working of the evil entrancement, just as the similar traits in Geraldine symbolize her inner evil. Geraldine, it appears,

is not merely one sort of preternatural creature but displays the characteristics of a lamia as well as these of the vampire and fairy, and Christabel is well on the way to becoming like her. As Christabel struggles against the influence of Geraldine, revolted but unable to break the spell, Geraldine proceeds to work her entrancement of Sir Leoline—a necessary step if she is to continue her entrancement of the girl without arousing his suspicion. The Baron is portrayed as emotionally quite susceptible, and again the theme is love—this time parental love—perverted and twisted into an evil manifestation by a conflicting passion. His inordinate fondness for his daughter has been brought out in "Part I," with suggestions that this fondness is coupled with a not unusual though scarcely normal parental jealousy and dominance over his daughter. Christabel's obvious fear of being detected in her nocturnal adventure indicates her awareness of the Baron's emotional instability. As we see him in "Part II," we can well understand Christabel's caution in "Part I."

This trait of emotional instability is represented as the Baron's essential characteristic. The story of his estrangement in youth from his friend Sir Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine is introduced not merely as a device to assist Geraldine in wriggling her way into the Baron's embrace, but also as a parallel to the primary action of "Part II." Evil influences had in that early episode in his life turned friendship into hate, just as an evil influence now is turning his love for Christabel into something strangely like hate, for

to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.

Sir Leoline is further conditioned for falling under Geraldine's entrancement by reason of his perhaps laudable but nevertheless somewhat psychopathic devotion to the memory of his dead wife. His action in having the matin bell tolled each day after the manner of a funeral bell, as a warning that it "Knells us back to a world of death," is significant of emotional morbidity. So, too, is his reaction to Christabel's adjuring him in her dead mother's name to send Geraldine away. His resentment is under-

standable as occasioned simply by his disappointment at Christabel's seeming lack of courtesy, but the emotional conflict portrayed in the lines which follow Christabel's adjuration is understandable only in terms of the Baron's resentment of what he considers a desecration of his memory of his dead wife, and the implication that his excessive feeling for Geraldine is improper. Thus the memory of his wife brings about a psychic complication that

. . . only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.

Of course, as Professor Nethercot slyly remarks, the Baron probably tells himself that the feelings aroused by Geraldine's embrace are "almost paternal," and perhaps he thinks that Christabel is conducting herself like a jealous child; but the point is, as Coleridge indicates in "The Conclusion to Part II," that the Baron's emotions are one thing and his understanding of them quite another. Here the psychology of human emotion is analyzed in one of the most penetrating passages Coleridge ever wrote. He poetically anticipates modern psychiatry in the theory of the emotional complex as he analyzes what is going on in Sir Leoline's brain. The question is: How are love and hate akin, and how is it that the pure and good emotion of love so often turns into evil manifestations? The answer in "The Conclusion to Part II" is that

. . . pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

These lines are in a sense the key to "Part II," interpreting

psychologically the plot development of the Part as a whole. They function in this respect much as "The Conclusion to Part I" functions in its place, to comment on and interpret what has happened up to this point in the story. It is singular that Nethercot and a number of other critics have judged these lines to have no connection with "Part II." Only the failure to perceive (or refusal to accept) the implications of sexual necessity and the emotional complex which furnish the psychological pattern of the poem could permit the opinion that Coleridge simply tacked the lines on as an afterthought, perhaps because of a similarity in meter. Their contemporaneity is obvious, however, from their inclusion in a letter written in 1801, and to suppose that Coleridge could have printed them in 1816 as a part of the poem without their having been conceived as integral to his theme is to take Coleridge at much less than his worth as an artist.

We cannot doubt that the meaning of these lines is as represented here, for so Coleridge applied them to himself in a letter which he wrote to Robert Southey. Coleridge's little son Hartley was not an exceptionally healthy child, but he was bright and beloved of his father exceedingly. Coleridge expressed his sentiment in a letter dated May 6, 1801, as follows: "Dear Hartley! we are at times alarmed by the state of his health, but at present he is well. If I were to lose him, I am afraid it would exceedingly deaden my affection for any other children I may have." Following this comment he copied "The Conclusion to Part II," and termed it "A very metaphysical account of fathers calling their children rogues, rascals, and little varlets, et cetera."

The connection between Coleridge's application of the lines to his own state of emotion concerning Hartley and his application of them to Sir Leoline's emotional complex seems obvious. In each instance excessive emotion of father for child becomes twisted into a wildly irrational manifestation. Harsh treatment and (or) brutal words come as a result of "love's excess." Coleridge doubts that he could love any other child if he should lose Hartley. Sir Leoline is cruelly unreasonable toward Christabel because of his love for his dead wife, whose death occurred at

Christabel's birth, be it remembered, but further, because his perhaps unconscious identification of his loss with his love for the child has produced the emotional complex in which he both loves her dearly and treats her with harsh unreasonableness. The difference between the emotional complex which Coleridge intimates that he would be capable of experiencing in the event of Hartley's death, and the emotional complex portrayed in Sir Leoline, is merely a difference in the source of frustration, the loss of a wife on the one hand and the loss of a child on the other. The resulting complex would be similar in the two men.

There is evidence abundant in Coleridge's letters that his domestic difficulties and emotional attachments aroused his speculations and what he termed "metaphysical" explanations of the strange ways of human emotion. The psychological realism of *Christabel* seems to suggest that Coleridge was using his own observation of life and his bitterly bought personal experience no less than his fantastic knowledge of occult lore in weaving the plot of the poem. This is not to say, however, that there is any direct attempt at self-portraiture, not even in the famous passage on friendship, but rather that Coleridge conceived Sir Leoline as a distinctly human personality whose emotions were keyed by his past as well as his present experiences, and were as appalling in some of their twists as were Coleridge's own.

IV

There remains the question of how this plot with its psycho-emotional theme, vaguely but undoubtedly sexual, would have been resolved had Coleridge completed the poem. One cannot presume to do more than state the bare outline of what is implied by that portion which we have. First, and most important for Christabel, the "lover that's far away" must return, for only the lover can rectify the "entrancement" of Christabel if the poem is to be psychologically resolved and if the traditional "rescue" of the folktale is to be effected. It is worth noting that both the realistic psychological elements and the traditional elements of

folklore and myth demand the lover's return for the resolvement of the complications. Secondly, either Geraldine's transformation from her own state of enchantment must be effected, provided that she is an essentially human and good being, rather than an essentially preternatural and evil being, in her primary character; or she must be made to appear as the indubitably preternatural and evil creature who must vanish when her spell is broken by the power of true love upon the lover's return. Although there is no alternative for the resolvement of Christabel's difficulty, there are these two possibilities for Geraldine's. What Coleridge would have done one can only guess on the basis of probability as shown in "Part II."

In "Part II" Geraldine is portrayed with progressive certainty as an evil creature, as well as a preternatural creature, whatever intentions she may have held in "Part I" when she insisted that:

Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.

It is true that, in so far as outward appearances are concerned, Geraldine is becoming even more seductively beautiful and feminine. But no doubt is left that Christabel—

The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise,
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind:
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!

If Geraldine is to be henceforth an essentially evil being who is deriving enhanced beauty and apparent goodness at the expense of the unfortunate Christabel, who in turn is acquiring the appearance of Geraldine's essential evil through the power of enchantment—then there is only one possible conclusion: Geraldine must be dispelled.

Had Coleridge finished *Christabel* in the manner he had thus far gone, we may be sure that he would have effected Christabel's rescue, Sir Leoline's return to emotional stability, and the mother

spirit's quiescence. The return of the "lover that's far away" is the only possible means of effecting this denouement psychologically, morally, and traditionally, and a wedding is the only logical conclusion.

Dr. James Gillman, in whose home Coleridge resided during his later years while undergoing treatment for his addiction to opium, claimed that Coleridge told him what would have been the essential plot of the remainder of the story if it had ever been finished. We need not be concerned with the dubiousness of some of the minor details of the account which Gillman gave. He may even have invented a few items in his own imagination. But in its essentials the story for which he claimed Coleridge's authority must be recognized as the logical conclusion for the plot complications developed in "Part I" and "Part II." Gillman's story is as follows:

Over the mountains, the Bard, as directed by Sir Leoline, "hastes" with his disciple; but in consequence of one of those inundations supposed to be common to this country, the spot only where the castle once stood is discovered,—the edifice itself being washed away. He determines to return. Geraldine being acquainted with all that is passing, like the Weird Sisters in Macbeth, vanishes. Re-appearing, however, she waits the return of the Bard, exciting in the meantime, by her wily arts, all the anger she could arouse in the Baron's breast, as well as that jealousy of which he is described to have been susceptible. The old Bard and the youth at length arrive, and therefore she can no longer personate the character of Geraldine, the daughter of Sir Roland de Vaux, but changes her appearance to that of the accepted though absent lover of Christabel. Next ensues a courtship most distressing to Christabel, who feels—she knows not why—great disgust for her once favored knight. This coldness is very painful to the Baron, who has no more conception than herself of the supernatural transformation. She at last yields to her father's entreaties, and consents to approach the altar with this hated suitor. The real lover returning, enters at this moment, and produces the ring which she had once given him in sign of her betrothment. Thus defeated, the supernatural being Geraldine disappears. As predicted, the castle bell tolls, the mother's voice is heard, and to the exceeding great joy of the parties, the rightful marriage

takes place, after which follows a reconciliation and explanation between the father and daughter.

V

If the reader has followed the analysis thus far, perhaps he can bear a further statement in conclusion of these speculations. Granted that the sexual theme cannot be dismissed from the interpretation of the poem, then do we not have perhaps, in part at least, the answer to the mystery of *Christabel's* never having been completed?

On July 6, 1833, Coleridge gave the following reason for not having finished it: "The reason of my not finishing *Christabel* is not, that I don't know how to do it—for I have, as I always had, the whole plan entire from beginning to end in my mind; but I fear I could not carry on with equal success the execution of the idea, an extremely subtle and difficult one." The "extremely subtle and difficult" problem of weaving out of the maze of emotional and moral complexity which he had conceived in "Part I" and "Part II" a solution which would be artistically, psychologically, and morally acceptable, was not so much an aesthetic or intellectual difficulty; for one cannot well doubt that he had his plot and theme clearly in mind from the beginning. Aside from his physical debility, his chief difficulty perhaps lay in executing the remainder of the plan without incurring both for the poem and for himself charges of moral turpitude. From 1801 until his death, the delicacy of his moral reputation, as well as his health, though largely brought on by his own emotional instability and his addiction to opium, was a constant source of fear and regret. No man ever feared calumny more completely or blamed himself for his own shortcomings more harshly. And yet no man of his era held a higher or more "metaphysical" philosophy of love, or a more penetrating understanding of the emotional complexity of human nature. One cannot read his letter to Henry Crabb Robinson written in March, 1811, or the letter to the Reverend John Dawes written in 1822, in which he analyzed the tragically complex personality of his beloved

Hartley, without realizing that Coleridge probed deeper into the psychological mystery of the emotions than perhaps any writer before Freud and Havelock Ellis. He analyzed himself, his wife, children, and friends, and studied the psychological implications of the preternatural elements in folklore and legend, but what he brought up from the depths could not be utilized artistically in the instance of *Christabel* without endangering the precious remnants of respectability to which he clung as did the proverbial drowning man to his straw. It may even be doubted that he ever got the consent of his conscience to the work which he conceived, for though his unorthodox speculations intrigued his intellect, his theological and moral orthodoxy tended to forestall his acceptance of them.

If Coleridge had fears concerning the popular interpretation of sexual suggestions inherent in the poem, they were fully justified when the fragment was published in 1816. Charges of obscenity, with implications of personal turpitude, greeted the poem from the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, and parodies and vulgar continuations of the poem made the most of leering improbabilities. Concerning one of these anonymous continuations appearing in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* for June, 1819, Coleridge wrote to William Blackwood, expressing enjoyment and admitting, "Let only no poison of personal moral calumny be inserted, and a good laugh is a good thing; and I should be sorry, by making a wry face, to transfer it from my Lady Christabel to myself." Clearly, his chief pleasure in the perusal of the piece lay in his gratitude that there was no "moral calumny" implied to himself, as there had been in the *Edinburgh Review*. It is significant that in none of his comments does he deny the central sexual motivation of the poem's plot. All that he would ask of a critic or parodist who recognized the theme was that no personal insinuations be levelled at the author.

If Coleridge had, as Gillman indicates, intended to permit the creature Geraldine to continue her "enchantment" of Christabel in the guise of the absent lover, he could not well have avoided even more harrowing suggestions of a sexual nature. As he

symbolically portrays the beginnings of evil in the innocent girl in "Part II," his use of ophidian traits goes well enough, but what could he have done in the next steps? His symbols could hardly have become less repulsive. The martyrdom of Christabel as it approached the poem's denouement would have come dreadfully close to the verge of unacceptability. Indeed, the solution was "an exceedingly subtle and difficult one." A man who feared calumny and valued the love and respect of his contemporaries all the more strongly because of what he termed his own "moral ideocy" could ill afford to publish, even if he had managed to complete, a poem which would place his name at the mercy of vituperative defenders of British morality.

EDITORIAL NOTES

I

WAR AND LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

By ALEXANDER GUERRY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH is ready and willing to close its doors or to make any sacrifice necessary to help win the war. So are the colleges and universities of America. With the colleges and universities, country comes first and preservation of the nation comes before preservation of self.

Furthermore, The University of the South and all colleges and universities realize that victory for the allied cause is essential. We know full well that the triumph of the Axis powers would bring tyranny to the world and the end of freedom everywhere. We know also that the nation must be free if colleges and universities are to be free, for free institutions can exist only in a free nation.

In the time of crisis, in the hour of battle, there must be unity among the people of a nation. This we know full well also. In unity of purpose, plan, and effort and only in unity of purpose, plan, and effort lies the strength for victory. Not for anything would the colleges and universities draw apart from the war effort or impair the might and power of America or the unity on which this might and power must rest. We pledge our allegiance to our government and our loyalty to our country.

Out of that very loyalty, however, and because of our deep concern for the effectiveness of the war effort and the welfare of our nation, we feel compelled to state our conviction that the contemplated policy of our government towards liberal arts education is wrong and will be harmful to the war effort and to the nation. As we interpret the present situation and the proposed plans, only those young men of 18 years and older will be in college after June whom the federal government will send to college, and these young men will take, for the most part, technical courses or courses in science or engineering or concentrated pre-medical work. Liberal arts studies will be practically eliminated or will have a very subordinate place in the student's schedule. The colleges which these young men will attend will be selected by the government and the number will not be more than several hundred.

This will mean, of course, that some or many colleges will be closed after June, 1943, until after the war is over and that in the other colleges, the liberal arts curriculum will be almost abandoned or tremendously curtailed. This will be in our opinion a great misfortune.

We believe that a man is a leader because of certain essential qualities of mind and character. We believe that military leadership as well as leadership in any other field depends upon these qualities. Among these qualities of mind and character are intellectual resourcefulness, power and versatility of mind, comprehension, insight, understanding, resolution, initiative, imagination and creative ability. We believe that liberal arts education more than any other means endows a man with these qualities.

We realize clearly the value of special training and special military training. But special training in itself is not sufficient. The effectiveness of special training rests upon the foundation of general education, liberal arts education. In the words of Gen. De Gaulle, "The real school of leadership is general culture."

If the Army and Navy are to deprive all or most young men of a liberal arts education, they will deprive themselves of the best material for leadership, the best material for officers and noncommissioned officers. This will be a drawback even in a short war. If the war is not a short war, this course will be disastrous

for the war effort. In either case it will be a calamity for the nation.

For this reason the new training program should include approximately one hundred thousand young men for liberal arts education, or a less number, for the main point is not the exact figure, thus increasing whatever will be the total number of men in college by about one hundred thousand liberal arts students. There is no valid argument against this proposal. As a matter of fact there is every reason for such consideration of the value, the importance, the necessity of the liberal arts curriculum for the war effort as well as for the period after the war. It is a very great misfortune that the announced details make provision for the most part only for technical, scientific, engineering, and pre-medical training and, with the exception of the navy deck service and aviation course, no provision for a group of men in the liberal arts field.

Such a program for an additional one hundred thousand or less young men for liberal arts studies would not deprive the armed forces of the immediate use for active service of too many young men 18 and 19 years old. The armed forces can secure all the men 18 and 19 years old they can accept and train this coming year outside of those to be in college. At the end of that time the college men would be coming into active service in a regular, uninterrupted stream.

And this is not special privilege for the college men, but a wise policy for the country. After all, college education is not a trade, a business, an occupation, or a profession. College education is training and preparation for a finer and more useful service to the nation in war and in peace.

In a great war and for a sustained war effort, the philosophy of life to which the men and officers and the people of a nation hold is as important as competent leadership or adequate preparation and training for military leadership. The liberal arts college, the liberal arts curriculum, study in the great fields of knowledge does give a man a philosophy of life, does give him an understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, does bring to him a sense of values, does give him an appreciation of spiritual ideals.

He knows the meaning of freedom, liberty, justice, equality of

opportunity, the dignity of life, and other great concepts because through history, literature, philosophy and like subjects he has seen something of the struggle of the human race since the beginning of time to achieve freedom, liberty, justice, equality of opportunity, and the dignity of life.

He knows the reality and significance of spiritual ideals because he has seen that these are the most enduring things in human history and in human life and that the spiritual depth of a people is their one indestructible fortress, the source of their ultimate strength.

He knows that there are such things as good and evil, not because someone has stated this fact, but because in his liberal arts studies he has perceived the eternal conflict between good and evil in the world for the mastery of man. And he perceives also the necessity that an individual and a people resist evil, cruelty, selfishness, deceit, and aggression, or surrender themselves and the world to darkness.

He knows that there are such things as beauty and truth, not because someone has declared this to be so, but because he has read time and again in history, in literature, in philosophy, in science, in mathematics, in economics, in poetry, in music, and in art, the story of the aspiration of man since his creation toward the realization of truth and beauty in his life on this earth.

He can comprehend, therefore, in a war like the present conflict the issues at stake, and for this reason he will persevere to the end for victory. He will never surrender, never despair. In a short war this is important. In a long war this is the most vital and essential quality in the armed forces and in the people of a nation. The determination to win, an unfaltering stoutheartedness built on understanding, is the chief component of victory in a long, hard conflict.

If an educational program and ideal are fundamentally sound and right, they are right for war and for peace. The liberal arts ideal and program of education are basically sound and right. They cannot be abandoned without harmful consequences. And yet it seems that liberal arts education will be abandoned or tremendously restricted.

If the war should end soon, the harm will be severe in the im-

pairment of liberal arts education. If the war should continue for a considerable length of time, the harm will be incalculable for the young men of several college generations and for America. If the study of the humanities is discontinued for five or six years in all colleges, the result of a purely materialistic educational procedure will be a major calamity.

The people of a country are the result in part of their system of education. Education is an experience as well as a process and procedure. We cut from the educational process the experience in a sense of values, in an appreciation of goodness, beauty, truth and justice, in spiritual ideals if we take from the educational program study in the fields of knowledge and human history, which constitutes an experience in values and ideals. We, in America, cannot possibly escape a materialistic attitude and concept of life, if our educational process is to become materialistic.

Germany ought to be an example for us. She is in part the fruit of her own educational system and her own educational philosophy. The thoroughness and achievements of German scholarship and German technical and scientific training were the admiration of the world. But German scholarship and German technical and scientific training without motivation and control by spiritual idealism turned from every spiritual and cultural concept of life and, on a materialistic foundation, built a philosophy of might, cruelty, and oppression.

Education shackled to this program chained the people to the same concept of life. And we have been witnessing the most amazing spectacle of all time, the return of an apparently educated and enlightened people to barbarism. That is just what has taken place in Germany. The whole phenomenon shows that triumphs in the material world, that miraculous inventions of every sort, that material wealth and progress, are external to the soul of man or enslave the soul of man unless the world of science and invention, unless the world of transportation, trade and commerce is ruled by spiritual and cultural concepts of life or by men who are governed by spiritual idealism and by the cultural traditions and experiences of liberal arts education.

Everyone knows full well that the all-important end and ob-

jective for America and every American is the winning of the war. No one possessed of common sense or of love of country could possibly advocate any course that would jeopardize the course of the war or postpone victory.

At the same time we do not want to win the war in such a way that we lose the fruits of victory, that we surrender the very values for the preservation of which we fight. And as a nation and as a people we can lose a great deal for which we now wage war, if we lose, or impair seriously, liberal arts education in America. There will come an end of the war. There will come the honorable peace which we seek to secure for ourselves and the world. There will come the opportunity to rebuild our civilization as well as our country. For that purpose we must have men educated in the liberal arts with knowledge of the whole stream of human history, with an understanding of the precious values of life and with an appreciation of spiritual ideals.

Finally, the source of democracy is the educational philosophy of the liberal arts college unique to the Anglo-Saxon people. Democracy will remain only so long as men and women are trained in this tradition, in the concept of education that emphasizes the enduring values of life and exalts the intellectual and spiritual growth of man as the chief end and purpose of our colleges and universities.

by LeRoy Leatherman

THE ENCHANTED BULL

FROM the house that stood up high—as high as a house could in that low country—he watched the night circle in. In the east, black against the vacant sky, the umbrella pine stood like a watch-tower. As the sky became colorless the tree became brighter, in perfect silhouette, its trunk thin as a straw from that distance, its top a comical mound, too important in the blank sky. Then the brightness was gone, then the tree gone. Magically. The chimney of Corley's house stood out above the level of the trees. This only for an instant and after, immediately after, one small light came through the woods ahead of the dark, emphasizing it. One quick movement then, like the snapping of a camera shutter and the night was around the single magnolia at the edge of the porch. Another and his body became a firm shadow. Finally one of the grown people came from the front of the house carrying a lighted lamp, under the lamp its circle running on the floor. The perfect monotonous pattern was completed then. The night had come and it was time to listen.

He stayed on the porch while the hall that seemed now to be all of the house, for with the shadows the rooms opening off it were merely useless dark things, was lighted, while the table that went the hall's length was set for supper; sat there with the noises from the kitchen and the calmer croaking of the frogs in his ears, while the night moved completely into the house and the house adjusted itself; there nothing but a listening thing. He went to the table with his parents and the other grown people, and through the long meal with its chatter that seemed more useless to him because of its noise, he kept his head turned a little to the dark outside. There was one instant always when he would have to turn his head away and give up for a while his

listening. It was the same this last night. From the far end of the table his grandmother's voice came, a poor old woman's voice,

"George, you've got to do something about that boy. He don't eat right. Nobody on our side of the family was ever that birdy about his eating."

Every head at that long table turned to him, at the same instant every voice came directly to him, there was a confusion of hands, and more food was piled onto the food he had not even touched. After a little while of looking down at the new helpings Mrs. Daigre's voice came again, this time secretly, as if the nights before had not at all dulled the surprise.

"I know something he won't be so fussy about eating."

She sent a small plate, covered by a napkin, on its way to him down the long row of hands. And again this night he tried to look pleased and a little surprised when he lifted the napkin. It was a plate of fish-tails, fried crisp-dark-brown. These he ate. The crunching noise that came from chewing them was enough proof to his grandmother and with her satisfied he could listen again. Then he wondered if the sound had come and gone during that small time, remembered that it had not the other nights, but still was afraid that it had.

It was when the long table was cleared and the hall left in darkness, except for one small-burning lamp at the farthest end, when he had gone to the front porch and seen the reflection from the lamp on the screen, making the dark outside of it solid, and when his grandmother's voice came from some dark part of the house,

"Here come Mrs. Wagner's cows."

Only then, as if at her command, for he never heard it before or while she spoke, only after, just after, the horrible sound came. A giant's roar it was for him, though it was only the dull clank of a bell.

A while later he left the porch and walked a little away from the house, outside the edge of light that came from the bedrooms. But not far away. Then Corley's voice came from somewhere off in the night,

"Let's git . . ."

With a quick look back at the light, he went toward the voice, into the terrible night.

It was at that instant, when he took the first step into the complete darkness, that he remembered he had not wanted to come this year, that his mother had not wanted to come, and that it was his father saying "it will probably be the last time . . . she won't last another year" that had brought them the great distance. He had not wanted to come at all. But suddenly then Corley was there in front of him and he knew it was too late.

They had arrived five nights before when there was no wind and the sky was starless, and the croaking of the frogs seemed to be muffled by the heavy air. He had gone to bed in a big room at the back of the house, under the old rafters that the rats ran across. His grandmother, her face shriveled like an old orange, had tucked the mosquito bar tight under the sides of the bed and said,

"That'll keep you in."

The next morning he imagined that he had not slept at all.

Corley came to the house after breakfast that first morning. Half-afraid that there might be something of the dangerous night still loose under the sun, Jim stayed in the house until the grown people complained.

"Boy, why didn't you go fishing with the men. This ain't no place for you."

"Why don't you go down to the creek and crawfish?"

"Get on out from under my feet now. Get the bee-bee gun and go shoot somewhere."

"Boys should be out in the sun."

So he left the house, went a ways down the road, and sat down under a tall thin pine tree, his back propped against it, his feet dangling down the short bank. He let hot dirt run through his fingers, then tossed little rocks into the road. In a while Corley came. Jim did not hear him at all and did not see him until he was only a few feet away. He tossed a rock into

the road, looked up at the pine needles high above him, looked down and there was Corley. He was standing still in the middle of the road. He was holding a shoe and from the shoe, turned upside-down, a thin stream of sand poured. When the stream played out, he shook the shoe roughly, dropped it, and while walking closer, fitted it onto his foot. His other foot was bare. He walked bent a little to the left side, as if he were carrying a heavy sack on that shoulder. His legs looked thin as a rule.

When he came level with Jim, he stopped, took off his shoe again, and this time left it in the road and stood worming his toes into the sand. And looking. Jim, though he did not want to, looked back. The sun came down hot between them, making a glare that hurt Jim's eyes, that put Corley in a particular strange light. Jim batted his eyes from the glare, closed them tightly, and when he opened them, he saw a medicine bottle full of something the color of ink stuck in Corley's belt. When he suddenly grabbed the bottle and stuck it into the light, Jim almost cried out.

"Bet you don't know what this is."

His voice was as strange as the rest of him, high and screechy, as if he had imitated too long the sounds Jim heard in the night. His words, like the cries of a strange bird, hung in the air, steadily echoing. And the words seemed to give him a face. Jim had not even thought of his face before. It was a small face set in a large head. Jim thought of the big cameo ring his father wore, with the face drawn small in the center of it, as if someone had suddenly decided to put it there after the ring was all finished. From the face and the way he walked bent Jim thought that he must be a very old little man.

Then he stuck his hand out and took the bottle. The cork in its mouth was all chewed. He held it up and let the sunlight come through it, watched the deep blue color brighten. He turned it up-side-down and Corley jumped, made a feeble gesture with his hand, then let it rest when Jim righted the bottle again.

"It's ink."

Before the words were beyond his mouth, Jim knew that they

were the wrong ones. It was too late then. Corley gave a screeching cry that broke toward its end into a harsh gasp. He doubled up, clasped his knees and dropped into the road. Then he started to roll in the sand. It was as if these two words, only these two by their very sound, worked on him some magical charm. Jim did not understand at all. He could not think at all. But slowly out of the garble of sounds Corley made, he distinguished a word, then another. . .

"Ink . . . ink . . . Jesus, Jesus Christ . . . Ink . . ."

He knew, finally, that he was being laughed at. All the time he had stood there, doing nothing, and Corley was rolling and rolling, disappearing in the cloud of dust he made, and laughing at him. He wanted to run to the house, looked, and it seemed then an interminable distance. Then he realized he still had the bottle in his hand. He hurled it across the road. It shattered against a rock and sprayed the blue-black liquid out over the sand. At the sound he realized what he had done. The crazy laughing stopped. The dust blew away slowly. Corley lay twisted in the middle of the road. For a dreadful time he did not move. Then he moved a little like a funny little animal, stood up, shook himself, and another cloud of dust blew away from him and off down the road. Before he spoke, Jim thought he might be crying.

"You bastard. That was dewberry wine. You bastard."

Jim watched him out of sight past the bend in the road. Little puffs of dust were still in the air, on a plane, after he had disappeared. Jim turned and saw in front of him where the bottle had broken. The wine had spread and made of itself and the sand a great black spider. The fragments of glass that lay upon it were the spider's eyes, sparkling. He felt a sudden panic. He wanted to run. But he forced himself to walk back to the house slowly.

Corley came to the house again that first day. Jim was on the back porch watching for the first time the night come, patterned. The small light had just come through the woods when he heard a soft tapping at the bottom of the steps. Corley was standing

down there, just the upper part of him visible out of the shadows. He gave a quick secret motion with his hand.

When Jim got to the bottom of the steps, he could hear the creek running at the edge of the woods and the steady tapping of magnolia leaves over his head. When Corley spoke, his voice seemed to come out of those sounds, not from his throat at all.

"You want to see something?"

A little breeze came up and set the magnolia leaves tapping louder.

"What is it?"

"I ain't telling no secrets."

"But you asked me if I wanted to see."

"You ain't seen it yet, have you?"

"No, but you said . . . you were going to . . ."

"It ain't time yet. Got to wait until pitch dark. Bet you're afraid of the dark."

Jim looked up at the house and saw a weak light reflected against the screen, a light that got stronger, finally cut through the screen and out into the night, in a solid bar.

"You want to eat supper here with me?"

"I ain't caring."

By his very presence Corley seemed to force an unnatural quiet on everyone at the table. Jim did not recognize them almost in their silence. He wondered if they did not like Corley, if it were wrong to have Corley sit at the table with them. He wondered what his father would say to him afterwards. He sat looking down at his plate. Once he looked down the long row of faces to his father's, at the mouth closed tight as if he were mad or keeping back a laugh. He looked quickly down at the plate again. The other faces showed nothing but eating.

Corley ate as if he did not know the others were there. He emptied his first plate, passed it for a second, and finished that. He had his plate lifted a little off the table to pass it for the third helping when Jim heard his grandmother's voice. It was like a rifle-shot cracking through the woods.

"Corley, how's Emily Diagre?"

At the sound every head above that long table turned toward his grandmother. As if she had a string tied to every nose. She suddenly yanked that string. Corley put the plate down, hesitated, then reached for a fried perch and did not reply until he was settled, holding the perch close to his mouth.

"She's fit . . ."

And the heads turned to him.

"She said anything about sending the bull to market?"

The heads turned immediately down to the table. Quickly Jim knew that his father was not angry, that he had been holding back a laugh. The long hall was suddenly filled with his laughing. Jim had never seen him laugh so hard before. He looked and the other faces were set, paralyzed in some position of chewing. Corley put the fish down. He smeared his hands clean on the tablecloth.

"No, m'am. Miss Emily, she ain't going to sell that bull."

His aunts and uncles and his grandmother stood up, then, and moved away from the table. As if all the food upon it were suddenly decayed.

Corley led him away from the house quietly into the night and the silence and imposed silence upon him so that the questions that were in his mind were abandoned. Gradually with the struggle to get across the creek, then the struggle through the thick woods, they were forgotten. For a time they seemed to go in no certain direction for Corley made long turns off through the trees, some right, some left. But not once did he stop as if to make sure that he was going the right way. Jim stayed only a step behind him, often was on his heels. The night and the silence pressed close around him, from the back and from each side. It was only Corley in front of him that kept the breath in his throat. At each turn Corley made there was an instant when he was not directly in front, when there was instead a chasm of darkness. Jim would stop, tottering, about to fall. He could not move away from the edge. Then Corley's hand would come to pull him away to the right direction. Soon they passed out of the stand of young pine into a place of gigantic trees and

between the trees gigantic spaces of darkness. Above the invisible sky.

They followed then what seemed a wide road cut through the forest, or a cave burrowed through it by some gigantic beast. Its walls curved and seemed ever about to meet, about to shut out the sky, but never did. From the walls, like stalactites, down to brush their heads, hung the weird immovable moss. But here there was space between him and the forest, space to run in. It was easier to breathe; it was natural to have Corley at his side rather than in front. They went faster. And now Corley stopped often to listen, to sound out the night. Finally he spoke.

"I guess you ain't heard about the bull."

"No. What kind of bull?"

"A bull with a hump. He is hoodooed."

"What does that mean?"

"Your kinfolks been trying to get the bull away from here ever since your grandpa died. They say he killed your grandpa. But Miss Emily says he didn't."

Jim thought automatically that Miss Emily must be right.

"Who's Miss Emily?"

"God-damn . . . Damn . . . She's your aunt, your own kin-folks. She's my kin too."

He sounded pleased that she was his kin.

"Miss Emily's my ma's sister and she married your grandpa's brother but your grandpa didn't like it because Miss Emily's from the woods."

What did it mean to be from the woods?

"Your grandpa's brother . . . he died pretty soon after Miss Emily got the bull. And the bull went away for a long time. Ain't nobody knows where he went. But when he come back your grandpa tried to sell him into town. But your grandpa died too. He got trompled by something in the woods one day. Ain't nobody knows what did it. Only it wasn't the bull."

This last said vehemently. Jim thought that it must be right. Then, as if the talk had made him very tired, Corley stopped and sat down on the floor of the woods, stuck his hand into his

back pocket and brought it away holding another bottle like the one Jim had smashed that morning.

"I usually sell it, but you can have some for nothing."

Almost Jim refused, but then the bottle was in his hand and his fingers were on the cork.

"Yank it out with your teeth. Hell, hurry up."

He bit into the cork, holding the bottle too much at an angle so that some of the liquid spilled out, part into his mouth but most of it on his face. It tickled as it ran under his shirt. The part that got into his mouth was thick and sweet and reminded him of blackberry pie. Corley had called it dewberry. While he took a long drink, then another, he wondered what the difference was. Corley made a short gruff sound and grabbed the bottle away from his mouth.

"I ought to charge. . . ."

The rest of the words were lost in his drinking. He had his head tilted way back, one leg drawn up a ways and one hand resting on it. The bottle sat perpendicular to his mouth. Jim listened to the wine go down. Next he knew, they were walking again, farther into the night.

"All of this here is the bull's land. All of it. Ain't nobody comes back here at night. Nobody at all. They're all scared. 'Ceptin' me. I been working for Miss Emily a long time and the bull, he's used to me. But nobody else comes."

The voice was not his. It came from the great trees and the black spaces between the trees and from the invisible sky.

"Your folks ain't never going to rest until they send him away. There's lots around here that would like to see him go. He holds too much of the woods now. But they're all scared, scared as rabbits."

Corley was gone then from his side, suddenly from under the arched trees. He was left standing in the perfect blankness of the night. There was no sound at all, no cracking of a branch, no night bird, or cricket or frog, no distant human sound. The silence was like a cave. He looked to his right at the wall of the forest. Blank space. Great tree. Great blank

space, black. Above, front, back, this side, that side . . . the night. There must be a sound. But there was none. There must be someone. But there was no one. "All of this here is the bull's land." He walked up to the wall of the forest. Slowly the fear grew, slowly as the trees grew higher over him, formed in his head and became a human, living thing. And, slowly, that was all there was; this fear as real as any human being. It destroyed all his memory, all his knowledge. Slowly he would vanish into the darkness like the umbrella tree.

Then Corley's voice.

"God damn it. What you waiting for?"

They went for a while quietly past the great bodies of the trees; then came again to the banks of the creek.

"Git naked."

There was a white space then in the dark. Corley had taken his pants off. Jim turned his back and walked a little away, took off his clothes slowly. When he turned around there was a larger space of white; he looked down and saw himself, white, stretching to the dark ground.

"Come on . . . dive."

The space of white went out vertical into the darkness, curving, and with a splashing sound, disappeared, then part of it was up again, disappearing across the water. He went to the edge of the bank, held his nose and jumped feet first down into the water and began to paddle slowly after it.

He came out of the water onto a little arm of sand that stuck out light from the dark woods. Corley was not there but there was the sound of water running softly and the slight waving of the trees back across the creek and now close down to the tops of the trees, the sky, visible with stars. He stretched out on the sand, naked under the sky. He ran his hands up and down the length of his body, pushing the water off. Where his hand had been, a new feeling came. He did not remember such a feeling at all. When Corley came and was standing, white, above him, he felt ashamed but did not know why.

"Come on. The bull is here."

He got up and followed Corley back into the forest.

They stopped just off the edge of a clearing. Corley held the last branches apart. It was an almost circular clearing and level as the floor of a house. The branches of a tree hung down into it from the other side, almost to the ground. From all the trees around it, moss hung colorless but lighter than the dark, emphasizing it. But the clearing seemed deserted.

"You see him?"

At the words he looked around the circle again and saw that there was something there. The fear began to come again.

"That's where he is most of the time at night."

It was a great beast the color of the moss.

"The rest of the time he just disappears and Jesus Christ himself couldn't find hide nor hair of him then."

The beast moved a little, then more out into the lighter darkness of the clearing, gracefully, as if he were making an entrance on a fine stage.

"He wears a bell in the day time but not at night. It wouldn't do no good at night."

The beast shook his head slowly, as if with pity. It was the biggest head he had ever seen, with the longest horns, horns that stretched back into the forest, sharply pointed.

"See the hump?"

The bull's hide turned near the top of his back from the color of moss darker, into a color as black as the night itself. Against the moss, the hump stood out, higher up than the bull could raise his head.

"Somebody's coming!"

He was jerked backwards down to the foot of a tree. The next instant something white passed within an inch of his face. The bull lifted one foot and began to pound the earth with it, slowly, steadily, as if he meant to pulverize that one spot into nothingness. Corley stood up cautiously, then tapped him on the shoulder.

"Look!"

He pulled the branches back. His father was walking na-

turally across the clearing, past the enormous beast. Then his father's voice.

"Emily. Aunt Emily. It's Jim."

Without waiting, without even thinking of the dark and the horrible fear, without even thinking of Corley, Jim ran from the place. He did not notice the bushes beating against his body, the moss beating his face. He ran until the trees ran with him, became one with the darkness, fluid, until he knew suddenly that he was running on the floor of a great black river, a river that the wind swept through, that had as its surface the invisible sky.

The next morning, through the mosquito-bar, he watched his father take his fishing tackle and leave the house. He went out onto the porch and stood quietly as his father assembled the things about his body; hooked the bent old bait can that still had a faint design of flowers left on its side through his belt, bundled the reel delicately into a red sack and suspended it from his belt, and hung the rod and net over his shoulder. Just before he started off down the road he turned and looked straight at Jim. There was no surprise in his face at all.

"What in the hell are you doing up now. Go back to bed."

Then he turned and went away, his heels, like a gay stallion's kicking up the dust.

In the afternoon Corley came to the house with a new bottle of wine tucked under his belt, and they went to swim in the creek. This time Jim did not turn his back to take off his clothes. And in the sun, lying full on the sand, he began to enjoy it, as if he had never had off his clothes before. Corley stood on the opposite bank, so thin his ribs showed through even at that distance, his hair, cotton-top, blowing every way in the breeze. He posed, dived straight out, perfectly, bent in the air and touched his toes, in the next instant was under the water. A cloud of dark water came up, spread through the clear, then his head came up in the middle of it.

"Hit bottom."

He swam over to the sand and crawled up beside Jim, two parallel trails behind him on the sand.

"See if the wine's all right."

Without looking, Jim stuck his hand out and felt for the little stub that Corley had stuck into the ground. He found it, pulled the string tied to it, and the neck of the bottle came up out of the water.

"Give it here."

The bottle came sliding easily across the sand. He heard the wine go down Corley's throat, heard the invariable smacking sound he made afterwards.

"That'd make you slap your grandpa. Cold as hell. Take one swallow and I'll finish it."

The cool wine went down, leaving a warm trail all the way to his stomach. Corley finished it and tossed the bottle into the creek.

"I'll dive for it in a minute."

The bottle floated for a while, swaying dizzily, then filled and sunk. It had just gone under when a tall old lady came out of the woods on the other side of the creek. She stood for a minute in the shade as if accustoming her eyes to the brightness. She seemed as tall as a tree. Her dress was long, down to her ankles. She held her arms crossed at her waist, her hands dangling easily. Her hair was pure grey. Her face was brown. She looked down into the water and he wondered if she would dive straight out too, curve her body and go below the water. He thought she was standing tip-toed now, about to dive. Then she raised her head and looked over at them, smiled and spoke, and he thought that if he had better eyes he could see her voice come over, floating gracefully over the water.

"Corley you're going to be red as a crawfish. And is that Jim Daigre. I haven't seen him since. . . ."

Behind her came the sound of a bell, a horrid clanking sound. The bushes shook suddenly, with great violence, and the bull came out of them, came forward and stood, holding his head high, on the bank of the creek. His bell clanked, backwards, forwards.

Then Jim remembered he was naked, naked in front of this lady and the bull. The bull had not seen his nakedness the night before. He rolled quickly over on his stomach, reached wildly for his clothes. But they were not there. They were across the creek where the bull was. Then he heard Corley laughing hard, the same way he had laughed that first day, the way his father had laughed at the table in the night. With Corley's came the lady's laugh, light, and he waited for the sound of the bull's laugh to come, to drown out all the other. And he wished, for the first time he could ever remember, for black night. He would not have seemed so naked then.

From the road he heard the grown people talking all at once, like children at a party. He saw them sitting in a line on the front porch, in rocking chairs, rocking back and forth disjointedly.

As he walked up the chatter quieted. When he opened the screen door and stepped inside, they sat perfectly still, all except his father, some of them with chairs poised foolishly in the middle of a rock backward or forward. His father kept rocking. Then there was a rush of words to crowd away the others that still hung in the air.

"Did you and Corley have a good swim?"

"It's nice to have a little boy your own age to play with."

"Go back to the kitchen and tell Emma to give you an apple and some ginger snaps. They go good together."

"It's too soon before dinner for him to be eating. He won't eat anything when the time comes. There's some good squash too."

"It'll ruin his appetite."

"A boy like him needs to eat as much as he can."

"Do you go swimming in Big Creek or at Mohawk?"

"Now, Annie, you know he don't know the names of the creeks around here."

Then his father's voice, forcing all the others into silence.

"Your aunt was here to see you while you were gone."

He felt suddenly that he was naked again. All of them were looking at him from their rocking chairs, asking him questions

with the set of their faces, as if they had only just realized he had said nothing since he came into the house. He took a step away from the door, stopped and looked again at the row of chairs and at the people in them, then walked quickly across the porch and into the empty hall. Behind him, he imagined the faces turning foolishly this way and that with different questions in the set of them. The chatter broke again, echoing in the hall.

"I never in my life. How did you get a boy like that, Jim?"

"He's got the pickeyackey, that's all. Comes from living in the city."

"When you going to start making a man out of him?"

"Why don't you take him fishing with you sometimes? That's what he needs."

"Why don't you all leave him alone. You're always criticizing . . ."

That, his mother's voice, these her steps coming behind him. This her hand on his shoulder. He didn't want her to kiss him now. So he took a big bite of the apple and pushed two ginger snaps into his mouth.

At supper they talked for a while, until one of his aunts said,

"How much does Emily want for the bull?"

Every head turned to her, every face with a mean expression on it. And they did not talk anymore.

After supper, when he was standing on the front porch alone, his grandmother said, from somewhere in the house, "Here come Mrs. Wagner's cows" and the distant clanking of cow bells came through the night. The same clanking that the other bell had made. The sound was horrible in his head. The bull would be back in the woods now, standing in the clearing, imperiously. He would not be with Mrs. Wagner's cows. But the sound of the bells was his sound, the forest was his and the night. All of this world belonged to him.

The long days passed marked by the clank of the cow bells. The interminable nights began with the sound, with the memory of the other sound, and ended in perfect silence. There was a pe-

cular silence in the house. The grown people didn't talk so much and when they did, it was half-whispered talk that he could not understand. And Corley didn't come back. Once in a while Jim would hear him somewhere off in the woods whistling or calling to the cows but he never came close. On the third day he heard men shouting way back in the woods. The women in the house ran out to the porch to see. A little later some men he had never seen before came with his uncles and his father and drank coffee at the house. They were all dirty and smelled of sweat. His father sent him out of the house before they talked. Outside he could tell that something had happened. Then he watched the night come.

On the last night, just after dark, Corley came and stood off in the dark and whistled. When he could, Jim left the house and disappeared into the night.

They followed the same path over which they had gone that first night; through the thick pine forest, out onto the wide vacant path cut through the woods and across the creek. This time they swam it in their clothes. When they crawled out of the water they were breathing hard. On the sand they rested again. Jim lay on his back and breathed deeply again and again, until it was the only sound he could hear. When he felt rested he turned over and stood up. He could still hear the breathing. He looked over where Corley had stretched out to rest but he was not there. Still the breathing, desperate breathing. He held his own breath but still he could hear it. Then with the sound in his ears he began to crawl toward the clearing. As he went the sound grew, pulsating, grew until there was nothing else in the night. He came to the last trees at the edge of the clearing, parted their branches and out of the clearing came the sound, the great rhythmed gasping that the space had held until it could hold no longer. The whole forest seemed to move with it. He would have run then, run to escape the sound if another sound had not come.

"They're going to try to git him tonight."

Gradually he knew it would do no good to run. The bull's

breathing was like the wind, blowing wild through the forest. He knew he could hear it at the farthest point of the woods, at the umbrella pine . . . as far as the land reached.

"They've been trying to git him for three days. He pawed Jim Wainwright bad the other day. Ain't they told you about it at the house? They carried him right by there. Hear him breathing?"

Almost Jim thought that he couldn't speak loud enough to be heard above the sound.

"What are they going to do to him?"

"Butcher him up . . . if they ever git him. And reckon they will tonight. I reckon they will."

The wind came then through the tops of the pine trees and for a while the bull's breathing was lost in it. And when the wind was gone there was a steady cracking of branches coming from the other side of the clearing. He imagined the men over there, moving up through the woods, bringing death to the bull. At first the bull seemed not to notice the sound at all. He stood motionless, a part of the night. The sound of his breathing came loud again. He began to move slowly to the center of the clearing, moving almost sideways, cautiously. Then, at the sharp crack of a branch, he moved back to the edge of the clearing away from the sound. His breathing was like the wind before a great storm now, blowing crazily through the tops of the trees at first, coming down to their first branches, getting louder as it descended. Now the bull's hoofs were just ahead of him, so near that he could have touched them. He dared not move his lips or his eyes or to try to hear anything but the animal's breathing, as if the sudden change might be in some way communicated to the bull. One hoof lifted slowly off the ground, dangled, ready to stomp the earth, to pulverize whatever was below it. Beyond the hoof he saw the legs of the men coming forward. The hoof came down, drew across the ground and threw up a great wad of earth and grass; raised, dangled and fell again, throwing up another clod, raised again, fell swiftly and Jim felt the earth shake as it hit, heard the earth rip as the hoof

went across its face, and he heard a scream like the cry of a tormented beast cut up into the night. Suddenly the hoof was gone, magically, from in front of him, the last echo of the scream went off into the night. Slowly through his fear he knew that the scream had come from his own throat.

"Christ Almighty. . . ."

Other words came to finish what Corley had started to say to him.

"Git them hind legs. Don't let him catch you."

The bull was not in the clearing. But the men were hurrying to the branches of the big tree. More men were coming out of the woods. The bull's breathing had stopped.

They left their hiding place and walked toward the cluster of men. In the dark and the excitement they were not noticed. A man came out of the woods swinging a lamp that sent three strong beams of light, one ahead so that it caught on the backs of the men, one to each side spotting the trees. He stopped, there was a clicking sound, and the three shafts of light became one, shining straight ahead. They went up with the light to the bottom of the tree. The men were crouched in a semi-circle. The smell of them was in the air. Their heads were bent, looking down. Below their eyes lay the body of the bull.

One of his ears was broken, made into a flap that lay crazily over his neck. Just behind his ear there was a jagged fragment where his horn had been. Between the ripples of his neck's skin, ripples of blood, as red as red paint, rolled slowly down onto the green, trampled grass. A little of it ran on down his leg to the knee, then dropped off. There was a clod of dirt and grass still hanging to his hoof. His jaws were open a little, a little of his grey tongue sticking through. Blood and the last air came through his nostrils, quivering them. His eye was open, blank like glass, shining like cut-glass, brilliantly.

A man behind the gleam of the eye spoke suddenly.

"Well, he's gone. God knows it was worth fifty dollars to get him. I never worked so hard. You can get the ropes now."

The man stood up and placed one foot on the bull's hump.

Jim recognized him then, felt Corley pull at his clothes, heard "We'd better git" and the man looked at him.

"What in the hell are you doing here? This ain't no place for you to be. Get the hell home."

Jim looked into his father's face, around the circle of faces turned up to him now, then down at the head of the bull. Then, dully, went away.

He and Corley went back through the forest under the black sky, saying nothing. Once Corley handed him the bottle of wine. He drank a little but it tasted too sweet. Just below the house Corley put his hand up and patted Jim's head once, then turned off the road onto a side path and disappeared among the trees. In a minute Jim heard him whistle, waveringly.

Just when the umbrella pine had disappeared into the vacant sky, his parents called him away from the porch, to the front of the house, to say goodbye to Mrs. Daigne. He kissed the line in her face where her lips once had been and said nothing but goodbye. Someone behind him said something about the bad old bull being gone out of the wood and how little children didn't have to be afraid anymore. He looked at his father, then looked away. His mother walked with her arm around him to the car. His father yelled, "So long, you old women don't need to be afraid of the bull anymore," and started the car moving. Jim watched as the house backed away, as the trees moved up around it, as the dark came down upon it. A light came on in the house; automatically he listened. The light moved away, leaving darkness. All the horrible things stood up in his head then, like the great black trees in the forest. And they set up a ceaseless moaning, like the trees in a storm-wind.

by Duncan Kenner Brent

MEMORANDUM TO THE LEADER

SO far as the history of men is known to us there is one idea that curiously enough has never been carried out. It concerns in a certain way the relations of man to man and of people to people. The emperor Akbar, it is true, some four hundred years ago conducted a minor experiment with children which in retrospect might seem sufficient to have suggested the idea, but he had in mind something quite different—it had to do in a rather odd way with linguistics—and in any event it did not result in the outcome he had hoped for. The children were taken from their parents in extreme infancy and whether some years later, when the experiment was over, they were able to recover or develop normally, we have no record.

A full exposition of this idea or project might not be desirable, but an outline will serve. Practical men of the right sort, those whom we call men of action, who are yet capable of grasping the significance of a clear idea and acting upon it, will be able to see to the rest.

For example, the Leader. The Leader to be a Leader must be historically sensitive; consciously or not he must be able to sense the temper of the times in which he lives. Social and political measures that might not have been practicable in one age may be affected easily perhaps in another. To grasp individual instances of that truth and to act successfully upon them is the mark of the true Leader.

The measures under consideration here are of this general nature. To furnish the proper perspective and background it will be necessary only to make an observation concerning war and the employment of organized violence. As we all know, in history there is hardly a single instance of a state, properly so

called, that was not founded or born out of violence, and sooner or later, that did not come to be dismembered or destroyed violently by other states. Thus the United States was founded upon a successful war of revolution. Sometimes certainly a state is set up by a more powerful state to act as a buffer, but usually this represents merely the will of the conqueror against whom opposition would be useless. In the same way some portion of a lax empire may secede and assert its independence, when the central government is impotent to enforce its authority.

In war of course the object is, as it must be, to destroy the enemy. That at least is the immediate object. In certain types of war, as some that are motivated by religion and probably all that are motivated by mere primordial bloodlust toward anyone that chances to live beyond a certain river or other tribal boundary, there are no consequent difficulties that arise. With the complete destruction of the foe the aim of the war is completely realized.

In war as it is conducted among ourselves, and has been in the western world for some time past, this is not true. For us, organized violence relates to the maintenance and alteration of power, to the extension and destruction of empires, to the dis-possession and enjoyment of the trade, territory, labor, colonies, and in a word everything the deprivation of which to one state many constitute gain to another. And in that case there is a difficulty. It has frequently amounted to a political dilemma. For when the conqueror or Leader has succeeded and finds himself in a position of dominance he must either call a halt to war and destruction or stand by as a witness to the destruction of what is now one of his own possessions, and one that he would like to see as rich and productive as possible. Dominance once attained, it is more profitable to tax than to kill, and under those circumstances annihilation by a conqueror of all the members of a large nation is something that is virtually unknown in our history, though conquest is almost an every-day matter. Thus unless he wishes to take possession of an empty shell the conqueror is forced to seek a means by which he can make the subjugated

people work for him, and comprised in that fact is much of the history of the race.

Slavery and various kinds of serfdom are certainly means that have been employed with success. Yet it is doubtful whether the efficient and stable enslavement of a numerous people is possible within the general framework of a civilization where slavery is not looked upon as a normal social institution. It may seem strange to us, but in the ancient Roman world there was a certain amount of acceptance when, through channels that were regarded as natural, slavery fell to one's lot, and beyond doubt there was more than a little acquiescence to their condition on the part of the household and craftsman slaves of later times and all those permitted to work towards their freedom. Nevertheless the spasms of violence that arose out of slavery were terrible, and once nearly wrecked the state. It should be noted however that a comparatively savage or simple people can often be successfully enslaved. Such were the great majority of negroes who were brought to America, and such slavery is still common in Africa.

On the other hand the difficulty of imposing any stable, really enduring, regime of force upon a people possessed of a long tradition of independence and unity is notorious. Of that fact the European world is an excellent illustration. The subjugated or oppressed, yet not quiescent minorities—Serbs, Croats, Magyars, Czechs, Poles, Irish, and others, many millions—have often been points of gripping friction in the European machinery. The situation, complicated by national rivalries such as Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism, has constituted a rarely failing source of unrest—a constant excuse for war and a frequent cause of it.

The nature of the problem then is clear. What measures, if any, are available by which a people as a people may be destroyed, while preserving their maximum utility to the Leader or conqueror? I believe there is a method by which this can be accomplished. It is applicable not only to vanquished and subject races but to any population group or class within the state.

In the past our methods have concerned themselves with the

curtailment of political rights, the general depression of the social and economic life, the suppression of education and the national language, such as the futile attempt of the Russians against the Polish language, and other similar measures. But after all this has been done we find, through the years, that the hatred and the active or passive resistance of the conquered cannot be softened by any propaganda we can conceive of. Methods like these are superficial. They are superficial because the political, social and economic life of man are themselves no more than aspects of a certain other definite, and fundamental plexus.

Let us examine a specific and simple fact of anthropology. What goes to constitute adult man? In a general way, two classes of things—the things which at birth or early infancy he found himself in possession of, such as his body and at least some of its functions, and, equally important, those things that he has acquired or learned. As to these last, our first thought might be of acquirements like arithmetic or brick-laying or geography, but if we should stop there we should find ourselves far off the mark.

The truth is, of course, that the acquired part or half of man's nature is no less real or important than the other part. For example, we must learn, largely prompted by imitation, to walk, though unless we are psychologists or anthropologists we may never have stopped to reflect upon the fact. Yet a man who has never learned will wriggle or crawl like an animal. We might meditate on that, but there is much more. We must learn also to speak, we must learn a language. It is by means of language that we *think*, which should be noted most particularly, and are able to communicate with others. For while it may be a matter of dispute to epistemologists and psychologists whether we think words, or think with words, it is generally agreed and sufficiently obvious that without language there can be virtually nothing whatever of intellect—in the customary sense of the word.

Without going further we can begin to see what would result if man were deprived as entirely as possible of the acquired part of his nature. Dispossessed of knowledge, unless what is evidenced

by animals may be called knowledge, crawling on the ground, deprived of language, and without numberless patterns of behaviour we look upon as normal, which the reader can supply at his pleasure, he would be a strange and instructive spectacle. With difficulty can we penetrate in imagination into that intellectual and spiritual void and that animalian psychology.

For assistance in that direction—and this bears directly upon our political thesis—we might turn to the several authenticated cases of children that from early infancy have been fostered by wild animals. As would be expected they evince the four-footed gait of their foster parents, their growls and barks, their diet and methods of eating, and in general their way of life. Intelligence is, in the human sense, almost inconceivably limited. They have of course no human language. In fact considering their reactions, habits, thoughts, as well as those can be guessed at, there is little or nothing human about them, except the form of the body.

Now it is well to note that mammalian animals attain a comparatively high development. They have generally a family life, a certain social organization, cunning ways of foraging and taking their prey, of evading enemies and protecting the den; in a word, of securing their existence. The young of *homo sapiens* reared in such surroundings have not had a very inspiring environment, but still they have had something. Yet imagine a child allowed to grow (which does not mean to develop into a man) only between four blank walls, on a clean floor, as though in a hospital or other institution, and perhaps accompanied by several other creatures like itself. There is naturally no record of any case of the kind, but it is beyond doubt that such a creature would be far inferior in general intelligence to the wolf or monkey child and to many types of imbeciles and animals. In him we should have the real *tabula rasa*, the longed for pure putty, virtually formless.

Herein is the basis of the new method. Against the adult population the Leader or ruler is to employ the usual repressive measures. But thenceforth all infants below a certain age would be sent to state institutions. There they will be accorded the

type of treatment that has been indicated. They will be segregated. They will be allowed to grow, very much like vegetables. As to their physical wants they will be well cared for, but they can never or rarely be allowed to see or hear or have any relations with human beings. Food must be thrust in to them, and any personal or medical attention that seems unavoidable should be administered, if possible, at night or by other means that seem suitable. Having no exterior contacts, they should have few or no contagious children's diseases, and in any case could usually be kept in a half-comatose condition during treatment.

In reality a regime quite as strict as this is apparently not necessary, though it would be the theoretically perfect one. Within five years in the country or province to which the plan was applied, the new institutional or herd population would be very considerable. In fifteen or twenty years the old population would be thinning away forever and the herd population beginning to breed like flies.

It would be a population of a kind new to the world. Looking into the faces of this prostrate race we should see no light of intelligence. In no accurate sense, indeed, could we call them human beings; that is, there is no intelligible definition of *man* that we can give but these creatures would fall short of it in some essential respect. Nor, clearly, is it too much to say that an epoch would be marked. In control of the primordial putty, as it were, out of which man was made, we should find ourselves able to make Nature subserve our needs in a way hitherto unsuspected.

For the putty will naturally not be allowed to remain putty. Our object is not to saddle the state with a useless burden. After these creatures have been allowed to progress, or grow, they are taken in hand by the staffs of the institutions and the psychologists on these staffs. They are house-broken and taught the few simple things it will be necessary for them to know. Those of whom it will be required must be taught how to walk and to dress themselves. For the great majority it will serve, and even

be desirable, if they crawl or are conveyed to and from their places of work.

By teaching, of course, is meant nothing complex, any more than in the case of draft or other animals that we commonly make use of. To pull, to carry, to shovel, are simple operations. To teach that a lever must be raised or an object picked from an assembly line at the flash of a certain light, it is sufficient to administer a few prostrating shocks of electricity when the learner fails: the action tends to become automatic. Commands are taught to be obeyed, as by a dog or any intelligent animal, not "understood." In no case would language be taught to any of these creatures. During a long and useful life many of them could be fixed to a work-bench daily, to perform a set of rigidly conditioned reflex actions. There is no doubt that much of our machinery could be adapted to their use.

Thus one of man's oldest dreams may be realized. We can have the perfect slave, or as perfectly as we are ever likely to have him. These creatures have no nationality, the meaning of the word is literally unknown to them—it could never enter their mind. The control of them is merely a matter of routine. They have nothing to say, and if they did, they could not say it, either to one another or anyone else. As easily as our ancestors trained a dog to turn a spit, we may persuade them to turn a crank, if necessary until they drop. And let us remember that several hours spent in their company would be enough to make us know, emphatically and quite rightly, that we had not been associating with human beings. They might correctly be termed a kind of man-made animal, produced on a novel principle.

There are some perhaps who may find the principle not easy to grasp, but if they have chanced at some time to visit an insane asylum or observe certain types of imbeciles, as who has not, it is hardly necessary to say more. These man-made animals, however, are not exactly imbeciles. They have, as it were, been allowed to solidify before they could develop. Various degrees in the moulding of them is, of course, possible to us. Some of them that after a certain age had been permitted the company of a

tame monkey or other pet would achieve a relative degree of physical coöordination and mental quickness not possible to those that had been kept more or less *in vacuo*. A number of particulars would have to be gone into—how these animals might be best broken in with other groups already functioning, how breeding-farms can be established, and the herd population maintained at virtually any level, even, unlike the other herd animals kept by man, supplying much of their own sustenance—for to them there can be no question of cannibalism—how, as we have said, by relaxing the treatment we can develop them to various degrees, making some perhaps quite intelligent, for there are numerous uses to which such semi-boys and girls could no doubt be put—but all that is beside the point here.

The thing that will impress the practical man is that in this there is a general method by which real slave automatons can be produced and be controlled by men that at least in comparison with them are supermen. And even before the herds become self-producing, all this can be initiated without any real violence, merely by the state's taking up infants out of the misery and starvation which the conquered usually have to endure, giving them food, shelter, better attention than they would perhaps otherwise get, and then, so to speak, by letting things take their natural course. Also it is very noteworthy, from the standpoint of the administrator, that once this institution, designed for alien peoples, were established in the social fabric, it would become an internal political instrument of great compulsive or deterrent power. It might be unrealistic on his part, but a man would be likely to toe the mark with some care if he knew that his own or the progeny of those near and dear to him could be consigned to the herds and there disappear, or, as it might seem to him, horribly not disappear and indeed proliferate in nameless exuberance.

In some such way, and perhaps in no other, can the Leader put aside half measures. If the life of a subject people cannot be properly regulated, it must be eliminated. In the great history of man we can find many groping attempts to reach that end,

but little success. With the knowledge and means of organization that are open to us today success is perhaps possible, for we can strike at the root of the matter. We can deprive our fellows of their humanity, not in any vague or foolish sense, but in earnest, with the result that a people may be entirely destroyed yet at the same time paradoxically remain useful to their conquerors.

Whether the historical stage is already set and prepared or is still being set for these measures is something perhaps best left to the historical sense of the Leader. But our age and its ethos are practical. It has apparently been more and more so ever since Bacon helped to introduce the experimental method and inaugurate the modern era. It is true that a cynic might say, and probably would if he thought of it, that this brilliant man, eager for tangible results, imbued no doubt by the New Spirit, was no bad representative of the age he helped to usher in. He was in his lifetime a judge who took bribes, and a government official of the practical type who found it to his advantage to demand the sentence of death against his former patron and close friend.

But we know enough in our own times of this sort of utilitarianism.

More and more our science has turned to the statistical method, and in the same way our thought to the pragmatic, the anti-intellectualistic, the voluntaristic. Many of our scholars, peering from the ivory or perhaps bakelite tower, can see almost as well as our business men that such standards as honesty or truth are but matters of policy and preference. At the same time the age is characterized by the invention of a number of things and processes that previously did not exist in the world. Leaving aside the use to which they may be put, we need have no doubts that they are conveniences of obvious intrinsic value and important in themselves—the miracle of the airplane and automobile, the miracle of the radio set, and, upon the same profound philosophical principle, the wonder of the collar-button. It will rest with the same efficiency under the neck-tie of the genuine thinker as it will under that of the schemer, or as we might say, the brilliant

and practical Leader who is concerned Baconianly with knowledge as power.

The atmosphere is congenial to innovation. Helped along by war and hatred, repressive measures may end by being carried to their logical conclusion. To go about depriving men of the characteristics that generally differentiate man from animal is doubtless an action that is itself devoid of these same characteristics, such for example as the idea of justice, and in the eyes of some, who are very few, the master and bestial slave may appear as it were indistinguishable. Still this is no more than paltering with the facts. One is a specimen of man the master builder; the other is laughably like something out of a nightmare. In any event the time may come for us or our children when we had better decide which we would rather be, and act accordingly.

by Medford Evans

NATURALLY IMMATERIAL

UNDER what spell does Mr. John Crowe Ransom speak of Mr. Bertrand Russell's "dialectical toughness," while actually referring to vapor? What phantom whispers into Mr. Russell's own ear that these are strong confirmations, which are in fact light as air? And who am I to pronounce so boldly? Only the child who cried out in his innocence that the Emperor's new clothes were no clothes at all. When I picked up the fall issue of the *Kenyon Review* and glancing through its pages saw first Mr. Ransom's reference and then Mr. Russell's "Non-Materialistic Naturalism," I felt immediately an access of that pleasure which the anticipation of seeing an athletic intelligence in action can stimulate in amateurs of the sport. Disappointment mounting to outrage as I read, I solaced myself with the growing conviction that the very fatuity of the thing was significant. But the fatuity must be fully exhibited for its significance to be appreciated. Hence what follows.

The first two pages are admirable, as, indeed, from the literary point of view the whole thing is. But I take it that for the moment we are not primarily interested in skilful reporting, which is all these first two pages pretend to, nor yet in poetic reverie, which is about what the last three pages constitute. "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." And if we wish to make the melancholy more poignant, it is possibly amusing to disguise well-bred ennui in the cloak of reason, speaking of "the balance of evidence." This serves when we have wearied of glutting our sorrow on a morning rose. But let us not in all seriousness speak of dialectical toughness.

Mr. Russell reports the conclusions of scientists and philosophers with clarity and, as far as I know, with accuracy. At any rate

what he reports others as saying makes good sense. "We no longer take as fundamental the concept of a 'thing.'" Well put. And one does not have to understand Einstein to understand this. One needs only to have observed that forms are transitory. That permanence attaches to nothing we see—this has been the theme of I shall not estimate how many poets. The discoveries of science, in so far as they relate to the point, are interesting underscorings of Shelley's

The One Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull, dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear,

but, metaphysically, hardly add to Shelley's semantic value. I accept—not just because of any "favorable balance of evidence," but because I see nothing else to do—the doctrine of "events." Properly understood it is unshakable. From this Mr. Russell leaps daringly to speak of a "series of events." At this point as bold as he, I take that leap with him. It is, after all, a condition of argument. Of course, by faith alone do we argue, by faith alone do we assume that it is worth our while to try to reason. I happen to share that faith with Mr. Russell.

Mr. Russell does seem to absorb strength from his contact with Einstein and Hume, for when on the third page of his five-page essay he leaves reporting and enters upon his own speculations, his initial step is firm. But from this point his motions grow increasingly erratic. What he says about immortality is almost all that could be expected at a certain level of experience (one, however, which Mr. Russell must in fact have transcended). That homely wisdom which declines to speculate on another life because it does not yet understand this one has something to recommend it. But *experience* shows that travel is rewarding though the traveler sets out before he has mastered the native heath—may, indeed, help him to understand better that heath. "Home-keeping youth have ever homely wit." For myself, the difficulty has been in defining the question, Am I immortal? Does it mean, Is my body immortal? If so, in what form? As I was at the age of five? As I shall be if I live another twenty

years? As I am now? All very different. Does it not seem almost incontestable that the body is not immortal? "Then shall the body return unto the dust which is was." There is little conflict between science and religion at this point. Religion may seem to contradict itself by speaking of the "resurrection of the body," but this I take to be a mystery, not to be interpreted naively, as the former statement, I imagine, may be. Naïveté is correct in supposing that the body disintegrates at death; naïveté is, however, wrong in fancying that the body has not been metabolically disintegrating and reintegrating throughout life; and naïveté is wrong in taking it for granted that there are no more possibilities after the startling dissolution of death. But, on a given level, I am sure that Mr. Russell and I agree about the immortality of the body.

When it comes to "mind," perhaps we differ. At any rate it seems to me that here is where he starts softening up. To me the difficulty of the question itself still remains. If, Am I immortal? means, Is my mind immortal?, then the further question pops up, My mind when? Now, while I am dialectically tough? Or as it was after a large dose of sulfanilimide, when I could in no wise dispel phantasmagoria? If "mind" be given a rational definition, I see no more reason to suppose it immortal than to suppose the body so. Hence, when Mr. Russell says concerning the immortality of mind that "it would be rash, at present, to have a dogmatic opinion either way," I must suspect him of sentimentality. He has just said himself that "mental events, so far as our experience goes, are associated with a certain kind of material organism which disintegrates at death." Then why does he think it "rash to have a dogmatic opinion either way"? Unless that word *dogmatic* be there just because so many people feel it to be rash to have a dogmatic opinion about anything. Yet, by clear implication, he was fairly dogmatic about the body. Why this precious agnosticism about the mind? I would go ahead and say the mind is no more immortal than the body.

When the terms "mind" and "body" are defined so as to suggest the mental and physical events with which we are all familiar,

then the rational answer to the questions, Is my body immortal? and, Is my mind immortal? seems so absurdly simple that it appears hardly worth while to have asked the question in the first place. Yet the question is not absurd. Ergo, it must mean something else. What? It means, Is my soul immortal? and the answer is, Yes. But for the moment we are reasoning from premises which we can be sure Mr. Russell accepts, and it is sufficient to observe now that on his own terms Mr. Russell has flinched before a conclusion. He hesitates to deny the immortality of "mind" when in his own frame of reference there is no reason that I can see why he should hesitate. In his own frame of reference. Of course there is reason in fact. An oblique, unwilling awareness of soul distorts his view of mind, as the formerly unsuspected existence of planets recently discovered once falsified astronomical calculations.

Ironically, Mr. Rusell writes one true sentence about immortality, but it seems to miss its significance. "In any case," he says, "the status of the question has not been materially changed by anything discovered during the past eighty years." He means discovered by science, and the statement is of course true. Science deals with "physical events," but the soul is spiritual. The existence of the spiritual was discovered far more than eighty years ago, but it has been neglected by the discoverers Mr. Russell was thinking of. Hence they have naturally not altered the status of the question any more than the erection of the Empire State Building has changed the course of the Amazon.

It is when Mr. Russell proceeds to "what may be called cosmic history" that he really abandons himself to the stream of consciousness. He very properly observes that "everything in this field is very conjectural." Still and all, there are conjectures and conjectures. Notice that we do not here owe the same respect to "the general view" that we did owe to the doctrine of "events." Where "everything is very conjectural" the general view is, *a priori*, more likely to be wrong than right, simply because there are so many possibilities and because it is the nature

of general views to be wrong until they are unmistakably right. Mr. Russell says, "The general view is still that the universe has evolved from a lifeless condition, and will return to a lifeless condition." Whether the first half of this is nonsense or a truism depends upon the definition of *life*, but one or the other it will be found. If the line between organic and inorganic is arbitrary and for convenience, then the statement that "the universe has evolved from a lifeless condition" is of course true, but no more significant than saying scarlet is red, or, at most, chickens come from eggs. On the other hand, if we assume that *life* is different from inert matter, then it is simply ridiculous to speak of the universe as *evolving* from a lifeless condition. It would in that case be parallel to the assertion that horsehairs in a rainbarrel turn to snakes. I must assume that Mr. Russell is less likely to be ridiculous than he is to be obvious. Hence he must take it for granted that "life" is one phase of the universal series of events and "a lifeless condition" another phase. To say that any *phase* is not permanent is simply tautological. Still assuming this interpretation of "the universe has evolved from a lifeless condition," we may make a double criticism of "and will return to a lifeless condition." In the first place, it is anything but tough dialectics to imply that as a matter of course when impermanent phase B (which is understood to follow phase A) has terminated, it will be followed by the reappearance of A. Surely any marriage of metaphysics and common sense will give birth to the supposition that B will almost certainly be followed, not by A, but by C, which will be different from either of its predecessors, though all three, being phases of *something*, will ever be the same as inevitably as they are different. In the second place, to speak more colloquially, but retaining our assumption of phases, the natural response to "and will return to a lifeless condition," is, What of it? "There will be no life anywhere in the universe." I repeat: If life is simply a product of the universe, what of it? There is this of it: It is precisely as disturbing as the fact that babies grow up, that youthful beauty fades, that active men retire and/or die. Sad?

Perhaps. Metaphysically significant? Scarcely. We have followed up one interpretation of "the universe has evolved from a lifeless condition, and will return to a lifeless condition" and found the statement to be probably false (since the chances are that a third term, neither *lifeless* nor *living*, is called for), but at best pointless, since no real distinction was made between lifeless and living. Had we taken another interpretation, the statement would have appeared not simply improbable, not simply pointless, but simply absurd.

"The second law of thermodynamics is thought to make it probable that, after a time, there will be no life anywhere in the universe." We have just disposed of the general view to which this contributes, but it will be perhaps instructive to consider the detail. When I first read this sentence, I had to go scurrying to the library to find out what the second law of thermodynamics is. Of course I do not yet know in a way which would qualify me to speak scientifically. But it is not a scientific conclusion that Mr. Russell draws. He suffuses the second law of thermodynamics with emotion. The clear tendency of his entire essay is to depress exuberance and unsettle complacency. On particular occasions both these things need to be done. Exuberance is liable to positive, complacency to negative error; and the one needs to be chastened, the other stimulated. Yet either is better than a sense of futility. Now the second law of thermodynamics does not in itself conduce to exuberance, nor complacency, nor futility. It is in itself emotionally neutral. Hence, when Mr. Russell uses it in a way that suggests futility, he is adding an emotional coloring not proper to science, not proper to metaphysics—proper to art if it is emotionally true, beautiful, and good, which I think it is not. The burden of my charge against the entire essay is that it is not science at all, which Mr. Russell says himself; it is not metaphysics, as he implies it is; it is simply poetry, and not at all good poetry in spite of its rhetorical skill. Some one may object that it is I who put the emotional coloring into Mr. Russell's essay. To which I can only reply, I

do not think so. Except as it is also I who put the emotional coloring into Swinburne's "Garden of Proserpine."

But to the second law of thermodynamics. I shall not be so foolish as to try to state it. Mr. Russell can toss it in lightly, for he knows about such things. I should imagine, however, that he also knows that most of his readers do not know it, and this being so I conceive that he should have explained *why* "the second law of thermodynamics is thought to make it probable that, after a time, there will be no life anywhere in the universe." Since he does not explain this, he leaves himself open to the charge, which, however, I do not make, that he is trying to stop our mouths with a technicality. A linguist might say, "The phoneme theory is thought to make it probable that, after a time, there will not be two people left alive who can understand each other," and unless he explained this statement, which could be made to appear not so entirely absurd as in fact it is, there would be few laymen who could argue with him, for the simple reason that they would not know what he was talking about. Yet if they had been previously impressed by his reputation, they would doubtless be somewhat disturbed by the remark. For myself, I should take it for granted that thermodynamics, being a science, could not in itself govern our emotions, and after a brief amateur investigation I see no reason to change my opinion. Loosely, the second law of thermodynamics postulates that when cold and hot objects are present together the cold ones are not likely to get colder and the hot ones hotter (though this is theoretically possible), but the opposite. A little more scientifically (but I specifically declare that I am not trying to be exact): Any system tends to a condition of maximum entropy. Entropy can be defined, still loosely, as the most probable condition of anything. Examples: a soluble in a solvent will distribute itself evenly; clocks run down; specifically, the radiant energy of the sun and the stars will in time (of which there is plenty) subside into quiescent darkness, and there will be no more "life as we know it." This should be "life as we do not know it," but no matter. Now Mr. Russell allows this hypothesis, in itself so un-

objectionable, so probable, to imply a meaningless universe. But the force of such an implication rests absolutely upon attaching importance to the forms of life with which we are familiar, upon attaching importance to "this world" which it is the first duty of a Christian to reject. His error is one which theology, or even metaphysics, might have saved him from. He equates "life" with the phenomena of biology and psychology.

I understand that Sir James Jeans, whose name is perhaps most prominently associated with this concept of a dying universe, has indulged in conjectures quite foreign to the tone of Mr. Russell's essay. Indeed, if entropy is an irreversible process, then the consideration which leads us to believe that the universe is by its very nature constantly dying cannot reveal how it was born, just as a study of the principles according to which a clock runs down will never in itself tell us how it got wound up. But such a study will convince us that somebody must have wound it up; a clock is not the sort of thing to wind itself up. I am not myself using this as an argument for the Deity, but apparently Sir James Jeans has so used it. I quote, not directly, but from C. E. M. Joad's *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science*: "Similarly Sir James Jeans infers an act or series of acts of energy storing concentration in the form of matter, which he envisages as acts of creation. 'Everything,' he says, 'points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of creation at some time or times, not infinitely remote. The universe cannot have originated by chance out of its present ingredients, and neither can it have been always the same as it is now.' " I do not quote this to imply anything about the total nature of Sir James Jeans' scientific-philosophic speculations, and certainly not to prove the existence of God, but simply to show that thorough familiarity with the second law of thermodynamics apparently does not necessarily incline a man toward atheism.

I have said that the emotional tone of Mr. Russell's statement was not satisfactory. My reason for this is certainly not that I like easy optimism. Ordinary optimism and ordinary pessimism are both too personal. It is my feeling that in attacking the

easy optimism of those whom he chooses to call theists (though, as appears abundantly, he never mentions any seriously theistical dogmas), Mr. Russell promotes an equally facile pessimism. For instance, it seems to me parochial to mention a view of the physical universe which looks toward the ultimate cessation of all strife, toward rest from the very dance of the atoms, toward quiet, uniform oblivion, toward, as it were, the inevitable Nirvana, without indicating in any way that this promises thousands the sure attainment of their supreme spiritual aspirations. They are not my aspirations, but they are the aspirations of some theists.

More than once Mr. Russell attacks theists with nothing more than a belligerent manner, since the substance of several statements is, when they are stripped of their emotional coloring, precisely that of certain well-known orthodox tenets. It is as if one said to a Charlestonian, "I think you ought to know that decent people take a certain amount of interest in their ancestors." Observe: "If cosmic history is what astronomers think most probable," writes Mr. Russell, "then a Being who chooses such a history has purposes quite different from ours, and therefore His existence, if He does exist, should afford us no comfort. . . . It seems never to occur to theists that God's purposes may not coincide with their own." The corner stone of traditional theism is that God's purposes are different from ours. So far from being encouraged to turn to Him—as we are, in our human state—for comfort, we are told that we are innately depraved and destined for destruction, that the *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that His purposes are so far from ours that in order to be saved we must be born again. How can Mr. Russell say that what theists have put far stronger than his own lightly chilling suggestions seems never to have occurred to them?

He writes, "I will not dwell on the argument that a Creator who likes Man as he is must have very odd tastes." He does well not to dwell upon it, for as an argument it will not bear dwelling upon. Not only for the reason mentioned in the preceding paragraph, but also for the further reason that if we are going to try

to imagine the Creator at all, which for the moment Mr. Russell is doing, it is not so much sacrilege as imbecility to imagine One toward Whom we can be snobbish. It is not worthy of Mr. Russell to write as if he did not desire a slovenly, unhandsome God betwixt the wind and his fastidiousness. For that matter, it is not very tough, it is not even very broad, to imagine a God who is Himself a sort of Wilde or Chesterfield. The atheist always creates the God he destroys. If he is a really tough atheist, he will at least create the best one he can. A different kind of weakness in this snuff-box and lace statement is that the pure taste which dislikes "Man as he is" is Man's taste, and so must derive from Man's Creator. Mr. Russell is not satisfied with "Man as he is"; God, however, if there be a God, made not only "Man as he is," but also Mr. Russell, and it is the divine spark in him that turns him away from the vanity and wickedness of this world.

The utterances which we have just examined come from two paragraphs designed to insinuate that because Mr. Russell cannot be assured from the evidence that there is any purpose in the universe (rather the contrary), therefore there is no God. Tied in with this is some of that lugubrious, suicidally hypochondriac debunking of man—not just "Man as he is," but even potential man—with which the rationalizing decadence of our age has so often disfigured itself. He writes, "There are living organisms on the earth, but we do not know of any elsewhere, and astronomers assure us that, if there are any elsewhere, they must be extremely rare. If they were the crowning glory of creation, one would expect them to be more frequent." Why? Whence this Chamber-of-Commerce standard?

A fundamental objection to the two paragraphs in question is that they have been written in disregard of system. "Purpose in the universe" apart from the hypothesis of God is nonsense, and to speak for it or against it without first assuming God is a waste of time. If there is a God, then there may be purpose and there may not be; if there is no purpose, there may be a God and there may not be. But if there is a purpose, then there must be a God; and if there is no God, there cannot be a purpose. Logi-

cally, the question of God is anterior; empirically, an intuition of apparent purpose might come first. It is profitable to start with the concept of purpose only if we intend to conclude with a positive statement about God. To say, Here is what appears to be a human habitation; hence I conclude that human beings have been here—is sound. But to say, Here is a vacant lot; hence I conclude that no human beings have been here—is unsound. Should we come upon an area which, for all we can tell, might have been visited by human beings and might not have been, then we shall simply have to find out through investigation not depending upon the condition of the area whether in point of fact human beings have passed that way. Only then shall we be able to conjecture whether the area is as it is because it is entirely separated from humanity or because humanity has more or less deliberately neglected it; *i.e.*, has some kind of purpose (perhaps negative) in leaving it as it is.

I do not object to Mr. Russell's reasoning on the ground that it does not lead him to God. I am very sorry if he does not believe in God, but I object to his reasoning simply because it is bad reasoning—sometimes none at all. Even good reasoning, excellent as it is in its own way, cannot lead a man to God, for the best reasoning depends upon its premises; premises are found in experience; and different people remember different experiences. Reason is concerned with relationship and derivative facts. Questions of fundamental fact are not answerable by reason. Reason could tell Columbus that the world was circumnavigable; it could not tell him that he would run into America before he got to India. It might have suggested the possible hypothesis of a new continent, but only actual exploration could discover the new continent. God is a fact, or He is nothing. We may reason about God after we have discovered His existence. We cannot surely infer His existence from the material world. Similarly of the soul: we cannot infer it from mind and body. Reasoning which pretends to do either of these things violates the law of parsimony, and will therefore never convince the atheist who has not listened to the Still, Small Voice, or has found a rational-

istic way to account for it. There is no way to conclude the statement, There must be a God, because— All fruitful reasoning about God must begin, God is; hence— Between those who disagree about the fact, there can be no reasoning about God. Since Mr. Russell does not seem to admit spiritual experience, it seems to me mere sentimentality in him to toy with notions of God and immortality. Yet there may be an explanation. Mr. Russell does not willingly admit spiritual experience. Yet obscure, unwilling recollections force themselves through his style, which because of his refusal to let them flow freely gives them a ridiculous aspect, which is Mr. Russell's fault and not their own.

Having indulged these whimsical views of God, purpose, and immortality, Mr. Russell next ponders whether we should say seriously what Hamlet said ironically, "All which I most powerfully and potently believe, but I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down." Mr. Russell feels the prudential after-clause to be unnecessary, and so do I. We may say what we think. Ill consequences will come from thinking wrong, not from saying what we think. But Mr. Russell does not rest his case for speaking out upon an assumption of faith that the truth may be spoken even in the teeth of apparent expediency; he appeals to history for a pragmatic sanction. "Throughout later antiquity, men grew steadily more religious and more unhappy." Now let us list the specific fallacies in this statement, which Mr. Russell leaves without support and without explanation.

1. He speaks of men collectively without saying whether it was the same men who grew both more religious and more unhappy. By a similar confusion we might say that the people of America have in the past twenty years become more scientific and more interested in astrology. That is to overlook the probability that the particular Americans who have become more scientific are not the same individually as those who have helped the boom in astrology.

2. He does not say whether by "grew more religious" he means *really accepted religious beliefs* or merely *pondered religious prob-*

lems. No religion promises any reward to window shoppers. The rich young ruler and King Agrippa "grew more religious" in a sense, and of course grew more unhappy. Very different were Mary Magdalene and Saul of Tarsus.

3. He does not define happiness. Later, he arbitrarily asserts that happiness "depends much more on facts about this world than on beliefs about the next. Few young people in good health would derive as much pleasure from the assurance of heaven after death as from a legacy of 100,000 dollars. A community which is growing richer will be happier than one which is growing poorer, quite independently of their respective religious beliefs." This clearly implies that happiness is pleasure, and pleasure is the sort of sensation which can be bought. The man with the price of a meal and a whore is happy. But "throughout later antiquity" this sort of pleasure increased. How, then, can Mr. Russell say that men grew more unhappy? And if this is not his definition of happiness, then what is? Is Nero an example of happiness or of unhappiness? Were the Christian martyrs happy or unhappy?

After he has defined happiness, next perhaps Mr. Russell would indicate what sort of scientific instrument he uses to measure happiness. Particularly mass happiness. He writes as if he knew what the degree of general happiness was in various places and at various times. I permit myself some skepticism upon that point, but cannot strictly argue. To relax for a moment and speculate loosely, what periods seem to have been happiest? Victorian England is a classic instance of a nation growing rich. Was Victorian England happy? I think not. Why not? It was disturbed about its religious views. In that "later antiquity" to which Mr. Russell refers it does not seem to me to be the case that Christianity led men to unhappiness, but that unhappiness led them to Christianity. "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean, and the world has grown gray with thy breath," but it was not a convert who so sang. Rather a wishful thinker who yearned for the dead Olympians. Absence of religion—the perfection of an attitude of civilization which led men to dally with all religions

and accept none—this made later antiquity unhappy. And the strength and the faith flowed to the dispossessed and to the barbarians, who instead of understanding everything and believing nothing, understood little and believed all. Even the grotesque faith of the Teutons could dismember the rationalistic Empire. So far was Christianity from being the cause of the decline and fall of Rome that it alone revenged Rome upon the barbarians, if revenge you want to call it.

In his last paragraph Mr. Russell recurs to his man of straw—the theist who wants to promote cheerfulness. I thought it was a matter of common enough knowledge that the excesses of theism have run the other way. Indeed, the heaviest charge against the unskilful orthodox is that their picture of an angry God has terrified the innocent; it seems to me perfectly reasonable to hold that one of the chief reasons for the growth of the popularity of science in the past century was the optimistic assumption of progress with which it was so often associated. Wishful thinking has led more people away from religion than it has led to religion. Wishful thinking rationalizes hedonism; wishful thinking gives one the privacy which an all-seeing God denies; wishful thinking abolishes Hell. Since Hell has always been more vivid than Heaven, it is a fair enough swap to let them both go. Wishful thinking, in fact, has denied immortality, since to so many imaginations the choice of a future life has seemed to lie between torment in Hell or ennui in Heaven. But it might be so whether we like it or not, the realist would say.

And by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.

But Hamlet was not a wishful thinker. Though he abhorred the thought of immortality, he knew he might have to face it.

Perchance to dream!
Ay, there's the rub.

Moderns have called the belief in immortality wishful thinking. And they have called it wishful thinking which made man of

unique importance in the universe. Maybe. But at least a relatively heroic kind of wishful thinking. We have seen too much of another kind, a kind which employs light-years to make moral decisions seem trivial, so that we may be spared the inconvenience of making them. Indeed I cannot imagine anything more foreign to reason than this dream of a generation (the fancy is not peculiar to Mr. Russell—you may see it in a thousand forms in the intellectual meanderings of these past fifty years) that matters so incommensurable as size and importance bear a fixed relation to each other. Where did we get this notion? Not from science proper, which has found the microscope as interesting as the telescope. It is simply an emotion proper to weariness, which would gladly make nothing important. What will future ages call the age just past? We have called it the Twentieth Century. That will never do, for more than half the twentieth century is yet to run, and it is clearly going to be different from the forty years we have known. I suggest the Age of the Lotus-Eaters.

Mr. Russell concludes his essay with the empty observation that "human happiness is more likely to be increased by a scientific outlook than by the habit of accepting beliefs because they are agreeable, or, indeed, for any reason except that there is a balance of evidence in their favor." If he were teaching adolescents, this might be permissible—if, even, he were reminding adults of a moral obligation. But as the conclusion of an alleged excursion into metaphysics, it is an almost unforgivable platitude. It is about as significant as the statement that what America needs is to get back to God, which is true, but often meaningless, and sometimes a cloak for idleness.

Mr. Russell's merit as a mathematician demands respect; furthermore, the "metaphysics" of this article is so flimsy that a professional philosopher would hardly bother to attack it. "Who breaks a butterfly upon the wheel?" Yet this sort of alleged metaphysics needs to be attacked, for it has its own kind of power, as we see from Mr. Ransom, who, with metaphysical intuition apparently deeper and broader than Mr. Russell's own, yet

speaks admiringly of the latter's euphonious nonsense. Perhaps the man's name protects his work. If Einstein scribbled meaningless symbols on a page, who would not hesitate to say they were meaningless? Yet this is not sufficient. Mr. Russell's statements are meaningless metaphysically (and inexcusably so, since it is clear from other works that he is capable of tough dialectics when he puts his mind to it), but they are not meaningless to the cultivated lay mind, charmed by their fluid music, and unable, or unwilling (the latter, certainly), to see through their superficial aspect of reasoning. How subtly luxurious to find as it were Swinburne combined with nostalgic suggestions of the schoolroom! How exquisite to be at once masochistic, scientific, and urbane! Above all, how enchanting to walk hand in hand through the philosophic groves with one of the world's great mathematicians and feel at last a compassion savored with irony for the bewildered youth that one was those years gone by in the algebra class! We have it now, poetry, philosophy, mathematics, all! Only we do not. It is still poetry. Third-rate prose poetry.

Rationalism, skepticism, naturalism, call it what you will, is necessary to preserve human sanity, to destroy hobgoblins, to dissolve those bodiless creations which ecstasy is so cunning in. But the uses of rationalism are limited, and to ignore those limits is dangerous. Rationalism is like carbolic acid—an excellent germicide, but capable of searing healthy flesh, certainly not nourishing, and powerless to check a vigorous evil, like cancer. This is the really tough rationalism, destructive, satiric, logical, salutary at times, dangerous always. But there are other aspects of rationalism. It may concern itself not with particular follies, but with the general temper of mankind, and once again, if it be one ingredient among many, it serves a purpose. But now we must change the figure—it is a cooling agency. All too often it is like nature's ice—most abundant where it is least needed. Again, there is the derivative rationalism of the politely educated, distinguished from the intellectually active. It lacks the positive virtues and the positive dangers of the other two, combining instead the pleasure of delicate, or at best elegant, melancholy with the danger of defenseless idleness and frustrated

aimlessness. The clear ice of Hume melted to the happy gurgle of T. H. Huxley, expanded to the melancholy breahtd of Matthew Arnold, and—like the latter's own shorn and parcelled Oxus—now strains along through beds of sand and matted, rushy isles, forgetting the bright speed it had in its high mountain cradle in Edinburgh—a foiled, circuitous wanderer. But we had better change the figure again. To indicate the working nature of the sort of dilettante rationalism which Mr. Russell represents in "Non-Materialistic Naturalism," we may borrow a metaphor from the Marxians and call it the opiate of the intelligentsia.

by Dr. John S. Marshall

FROM ARISTOTLE TO CHRIST
OR
THE PHILOSOPHY OF WILLIAM PORCHER DUBOSE

UNFORTUNATELY DuBose's great philosophical work, *From Aristotle to Christ*, only survives in a fragmentary form. It seems to have existed in typescript until quite recently, but a disastrous fire that destroyed the DuBose home consumed this manuscript along with many other valuable papers. Fortunately twenty-four of the forty chapters of the work still survive, and still more fortunately these are the crucial chapters for the determination of the philosophical argument.

Those who studied with Dr. DuBose know that he was primarily an ethical philosopher and that his approach to philosophy was by the path of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. He accepted the general moral conceptions of Aristotle and discovered a metaphysics and a theory of knowledge in the ethical positions of the Great Stagirite. He accepted a theory of reality that found its ground in the ethical life rather than in the theoretical life treated as a department of existence completely transcending the moral sphere. For DuBose the moral life is the first stage of the real and ultimate life of man, and theory is merely a contemplation or viewing of the potentiality of man reaching upward and onward to the divine. But he does not accept that kind of Aristotelianism that sees the highest phase of human existence in the activity of merely thinking the eternal and simply contemplating the unchanging.

DuBose is an Aristotelian, but he has an interpretation of the

Peripatetic philosophy that brings him into the stream of thought of the Platonizing commentators of the Eastern Orthodox Church and of the Neo-Platonic interpreters that preceded them. The Aristotle of DuBose is not the Stagirite of Bonitz, or Jaeger, or Ross but the Aristotle of Byzantium and the Renaissance, the Aristotle of the Eastern Church. Hence his lectures are interesting not so much as an interpretation of an ancient Greek philosopher of the fourth century before Christ but of the Aristotelian philosophy as the heritage of the Eastern Church, the Renaissance, and the modern Anglican Communion. It is Aristotle as he lives and breathes in the thought of a great philosopher of the modern world; it is Aristotle as he is mediated through tradition and transfigured in the burning crucible of DuBose's own thinking and life. It is Aristotle, but Aristotle as the heir of the ages and not the Aristotle of reconstruction and ancient research.

I. HAPPINESS AS THE GOAL OF LIFE

The first stage of DuBose's philosophy is not speculative but practical; it begins with the moral life of man. He asks with Aristotle the character of the true goal of human life. In the spirit of Aristotle he rejects the harsh demands of the Stoic and the Puritan: he repudiates duty and obedience as the ends of man's existence. And with Aristotle he accepts the deep conviction of thoughtful men of practical experience that the end of our life is happiness. The determination of the end is important, because it is the end that reveals to us what is primary and what is secondary or instrumental in life. "With Aristotle the End is everything, seeing that the End is That for which everything else exists. There are of course innumerable and manifold ends on the way to The End—but these are only *means*, or ways and steps, to It."¹ Hence, if Happiness is the end of life, duty and

¹From Aristotle to Christ, ch. 1. (All references are to Part I of the manuscript).

discipline, labors and toil, and heartaches and tears, tragedies, and all such things are only means but never are ends of our existence. Therefore the Puritan may stress many valuable aspects of life, for the bourgeois magnate who conceives the end of life to be the acquisition of power does realize an aspect of life that is important, but he does not find life's end, just because he has lost the significance of life, its immanent purpose and destiny.

The end of life is not of our choosing. That end is immanent in life itself and is deeper than our will and choice. It is our true nature, our implied destiny, and the significance of our life. If we reject our truest selves, if we choose in opposition to our essential natures, then we frustrate our happiness, we blight our lives, and our very existence becomes meaningless for us. "The Happiness of which so much is made can, of course, be only one thing—and that the real thing, or the essential Reality, of human life. There must be no mistake about it; and there *are* endless mistakes and perversions of it. It is only one thing, and there is but one way to it. And when it is reached, or in proportion as it is attained—it may be much else, as Beauty or Nobleness, Righteousness, Goodness, Perfection, or what not, but in the end it cannot be anything less or else than pure pleasure happiness, or blessedness. For if this is lacking, then our Love, our Heart, our Soul, our Self is not in it, and it is not in Us. Happiness, then as the Ultimate Satisfaction of Love, even as Love is the ultimate principle of Life (and so, is Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Perfection) is at least the limit and the measure; but is it not also the essence of All, since it is Love perfected and satisfied?"² If we do not choose aright, we are frustrated, and then no amount of willing, no coercing, no forcing ourselves can deliver us from the demands of our true nature and can save us from the unhappiness which is the curse of the life that has missed

²op. cit., ch. 1.

its course, and failed to find the destiny for which it was intended.

There is an immanent character of our natures which we disregard at our own peril. It is the stamp and constitution of our inclinations and interests; it is the type of our being. These motives and affections are summed up by DuBose in the emotion, drive, and affection of love. Love gives us a better notion of the demand, the dynamic, and the affection of life than anything else. With it before us we can understand the character of life better than any other way. If love is the drive of life, and DuBose is convinced that it is the seminal principle of all life,⁸ we can readily see that satisfaction is the goal of our activity. The fruition of the desire in satisfaction is the destiny of love as an affection and as an act. Hence we can speak of its end as pleasure, or blessedness. The end of our motives and inclinations is a completed activity, as satisfaction of living activity. Of course it is more than mere pleasure as a feeling tone, a moment of thrill or rapture; but if we characterize a thing by its symptom, its conspicuous and obvious phase, we can speak of the end of life as "pure pleasure or happiness."

2. THE GOAL OF LIFE AS ACTIVITY

Now it is characteristic of this method of considering life and its meaning to stress the end rather than the means, the goal rather than the beginnings. DuBose is a complete Aristotelian in this respect, and he considers, therefore, that it is actualization rather than mere potentiality that is our fundamental interest when we consider the moral life. That is the reason that the conception of morality as a fulfillment of duties enjoined upon us seems to him less than the fullest moral ideal. And that is the reason that Aristotle leads him on to Christ. The fullest life is an actualization of the full potentiality of human nature. Even the virtues of Aristotle do not reveal the fulness of human potentiality, and

⁸op. cit., ch. 15.

laws of Aristotelian conduct, like the Mosaic law, are only the schoolmasters that lead us on to Christ. This will become clear later in our exposition.

Goodness in life, the happiness of existence, is only to be found in realization, in actualization.⁴ It is never a mere matter of the static or inactive; it is never a matter of mere passive obedience, or freedom from sin or misconduct. The fulness of life, the bliss beyond compare, the happiness that is life's goal, is not a state, but an activity; it is life being lived, life lived completely and fully. Aristotle is a good guide: he points out that there are two kinds of human acts, those that are an end in themselves and those that lead to the production of some object or thing.⁵ For example, the activities of courage and friendship are ends in themselves, but the activities of building a house or making a locomotive aim at something beyond the activities themselves, they aim at the construction of the house and the locomotive. So the locomotive and the house are more important than the activities that produced them. But in love and courage the very activities as such are ends in themselves and need nothing beyond themselves to make them intrinsically worthwhile.

Now the goodness of character, the happy life par excellence, needs nothing beyond itself for its own value. It is an end in itself; but it is an end that is activity and actualization. It is the full potency of man realized. The reason frustrated and thwarted people are unhappy is obvious: they are prevented from becoming their true selves; they are, yet they are not, for we are not until we are truly actualized.

3. THE PRAGMATIC ELEMENT IN LIFE

This leads us to recognize the most puzzling aspect of DuBose's philosophy, the pragmatic phase of human life. The meaning of anything is to be found in its end: that is its true existence. To

⁴op. cit., ch. 3.

⁵Ethica Nicomachea, 1094a. 3 sqq.

express its idea he renders Aristotle's pregnant phrase τὸ τι ἡγεμονικόν εἶναι directly into English. Aristotle tells us that the essence, the reality of a man, is to be found in the man as matured and perfected, the man as he is destined to be. The acorn finds its meaning in the oak, the baby in the man matured and fully grown to the strength of his manhood. So DuBose describes the essence of man by rendering Aristotle's words literally into English by the phrase, "What were it to be [a man]." The very strangeness of the expression in English—it is strange also in Greek—makes clear the fact that DuBose wished to express along with Aristotle that we are not what we now are, but we are what we are destined to be, or at least could be if we followed our divinely determined end and became the "sons of God." "The end of the human soul can be and is only to be all that it can become, all that is in it to be. And that, according to Aristotle, is no indefinite, indeterminate thing, dependent upon accident or circumstance, but an end appointed for it by the divinity immanent in its nature."

We do have free wills, that is one reason why our true nature may be frustrated, but even so, the will does not create our natures; it only actualizes that nature or else frustrates it. There is a true purpose for man, and there is possible for us a full fruition of our lives. The diseased tree bears a blighted fruit, but its end and its true nature are actually radiant green foliage and sweet and luscious fruit. Cured of its disease, it returns to its native character and brings forth first the blossom then the fruit. We can mar and we can frustrate, but our true nature is something divine, is something eternal. "The first and most elemental impulse and effort of Nature is to the Eternal and the Divine: to reproduce and continue itself and to give utterance or realization to the divine reason and meaning that is in it."⁴ There is an eternal and divine Principle both in Nature and in

⁴DuBose, op. cit., ch. 3.
⁵op. cit., ch. 15.

Man and that Principle is deeper than our wills and more potent than our thoughts.

This deeper Principle does frustrate our arbitrary exercise of will, yet we may struggle against it and blight the fruitage of our lives. That is the reason why DuBose makes Will the most powerful thing in man. Will for him is the actualization of the potentiality of our nature. Will is not an abstract power: it is not a mere faculty. Will is simply the actualization of the potentialities of our natures. Now the true potentiality of our natures is the Principle of Eternity within us. Our true potentiality is the power to become what our destiny calls upon us to be. To fail to realize our true selves is to bring unhappiness and heartache upon our endeavors. But we may struggle against our true selves, and actualize a diseased form of our being. For good or for evil, we actualize for or against ourselves. This actualization is our will. From the standpoint of our happiness, of our life's fruition, the will is the most significant thing about us. But essentially, from the standpoint of essence there is a deeper stratum of our being; that deeper reality is the destiny of our lives, the thing that we might be but often are not. Since life lies in its actualization, our will is our actualizing function; it is we because it is we as we become. Still there is something about us not exhausted by even our own efforts, important though they may be. There is a divinity that shapes our ends, and it shapes us by frustrating our own false efforts. As an essential nature that lies deeper than our wills, it causes us a distress and unhappiness when we are false and unreal and a heartbreak that follows our sinful actions and desires.

Thus in a certain sense DuBose is a Pragmatist: an Aristotelian pragmatist, and to understand this pragmatic phase in his thinking is to appreciate his special position in philosophy.

We have seen that reality lies in actualization. We can never really know mere potentiality, yet potentiality gives us the power to develop in various directions. Since there is freedom,

the real for life is that which is actualized, not that which is merely potential. At this point DuBose is an Aristotelian, but an Aristotelian who stresses actualization more than did Aristotle himself, for Aristotle believes that we can know much more about our potentialities than does DuBose. That is the reason that potentiality is stressed in a different manner by the Stagirite and DuBose. Aristotle has a closed system, whose potentialities are all known: DuBose believes that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be" and that our destiny stretches on to infinity and that its ideal phase is never really known.* We only know what has thus far been achieved.

4. THE IDEAL GOAL

But there is an ideal phase in human life, there is a potentiality of a realization of the eternal and the divine. We are more than we have yet achieved, just because we shall achieve more than we now are. Our human nature is never fully actualized, it is always becoming. And here DuBose holds that Aristotle's doctrine of the divinity and eternity latent within man's nature should drive us to the recognition of the immortality of man and the ever-forward drive that pushes man on in the quest of his true nature. The ideal phase in our life we discover as we watch ourselves ever experiment and ever strive to realize that far-off goal of life which is the happiness that is bliss and the purest joy. But there is no easy way to discover the content of this goal, we can only experiment and endeavor, and watch the results achieved. Yet we do know that there is a true nature, a real actualization that is our essential selves. Aristotle was not wrong when he taught his doctrine of a divine potentiality. But it is real only as it is actualized, and we only know what is actualized. Our knowledge is dependent on our efforts, and our intuition of the divine or the ideal phase in our nature must of necessity rest to some extent on the actualization of our wills, must rest on the achievements

**op. cit.*, ch. 17.

of our lives. For speculation is not primarily inferential, it is seeing, it is discerning, and even its inferences rest on insights, and our insights are merely the discerning of our achievements. As man is the growing end of the universe, we have no insight as to the meaning of the further reaches of life, except as we strive, except as we achieve, and by achieving know what we are becoming and shall be. Only as man achieves, can he know, and theoretically realize what he is becoming. That is the reason Aristotle strives to reach the goal, but fails: the Human Achievement of perfection, the fruition of the Divine in life, the eternal, has not been concretely revealed to him, and hence he dares not pass beyond the Athenian Gentleman that he knows, and hence he reduces life to a cycle for its destiny. But the Pragmatic element of experience need not frighten us: we recognize an infinity that Aristotle dared not face, and we realize the limitations of knowledge divorced from actualization.

There is a divine destiny for us, and hence we are not mere Pragmatists. Life is not a mere experiment, and the human will, human actualization, is not merely capricious. There is a hidden meaning, a significance in "all the toil and pain, all the sweat and tears and blood, all the battle with the mastery of the world...." God is working in the world, and there is a destiny for it. The very frustrations, the very tragedies of battles and dynasties, the failures of men great and small, are parts of the great drama of the universe. And it is not a blind tragedy, it is a meaningful and significant struggle, the realization in the scene of human history of the meaning of God for the world and in the world. God will justify Himself in human life and in the end redeem it for and to Himself. It is not a capricious struggle, because for DuBose there is a divine Providence that coöperates in the world and guides and directs its destiny. So the divine element in history redeems our Pragmatism from the capriciousness of the Pragmatic Humanist and leads us to the Incarnation rather than to man as the Alpha and Omega of the universe.

There is a Divinity that shapes our ends: the recognition of that fact transfigures our Pragmatism and gives our life a character and meaning. For the Divine not only is transcendent, it is immanent and as immanent lives and works within and through us.⁹ We are free and our life is ours, but even so there is a force within us that when frustrated brings upon us unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Our deepest, our truest selves, have something of the Divine about them. Hence we work, but not we alone, for in Him we live and move and have our being, and without Him we are nothing. And the Divinity within us, the Kingdom of God within our souls is the warrant, is the final surety that our labors are not in vain, and that our loves, our hopes, our fears are not meaningless and wholly futile.

Still the God of our struggles, the Immanent Divinity within us is not enough. We learn by the discipline of the formal virtues, we struggle on little by little towards a goal whose meaning is not always clear to us. Aristotle points to the infinity that stretches on beyond us. His virtues do point to happiness but they never quite achieve it. They are the incomplete forms and signposts of the goal that lies ahead. However they do not themselves embody it, because they only point towards it.

Morals as virtues are not enough for life: they are far too limited for the richness of love, and for the fulness of mercy and kindness. Righteousness is a good, but it is completed in an excellency of life that is more than righteousness. The law is the schoolmaster that leads us on to Christ. The virtues of Aristotle are goods, but they are merely steps to a fulness of existence of which Aristotle never more than dreamed. His teachings point to a blessedness beyond our present, and his virtues are a minimum for a life that would share any real happiness:¹⁰ but there is a blessedness that far transcends these rules of Aristotle.

⁹op. cit., ch. 1.

¹⁰At this point as at all others in the paper where Aristotle is interpreted, the author wishes to make clear that he is not giving his own views but those of DuBose. A critique of DuBose as an expositor of Aristotle would be a very valuable classical and philosophical study, but is not the aim of this essay.

DuBose does not think that the goal of happiness is discarded by the Christian: rather the whole message of Our Lord stresses and gives point to the contention that the aim of life is happiness. Jesus like Aristotle spoke of the perfected life as happy, and as blessed. The Beatitudes are filled with the thought of blessedness: that is the true goal of the Christian's existence. And none of Aristotle is lost in the Christian life. Just as not one jot nor one tittle of the law is destroyed, so no phase of Aristotle's moral virtues is lost in Christianity. But Aristotle is fulfilled: he is caught up in the fulness of Christian life and his virtues find their meaning, their completed character, in a fuller life. That is the reason why DuBose speaks of ethics as lost in religion, and religious life as more than ethics. Aristotle takes us as far as ethics can go: he finds his completion in the life of Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

That does not mean that DuBose is antinomian: the life in Christ is never less than the demands of Aristotle. Our Lord's way of life is fuller than Aristotelian virtues: it is a fuller joy and a fuller way of living. The formal character of the Aristotelian virtues blossom forth in the Christian freedom of the spirit of joy and peace; the limitation of the self-contained *μεγαλόψυχος* or proud man, expands into the full flower of the man who is great of spirit but accepts the tokens of love from his inferiors because he is great enough to accept as well as to give.

Aristotle's great-souled or proud gentleman could not accept many gifts because he who accepts is obligated to the one who gives to him. So Aristotle feels that his gentleman must be self-contained and give rather than receive. The Incarnate Lord in whom rests the fulness of life has revealed a higher nobility. Aristotle was right, "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; but there is a receiving as of love, a tenderness and kindness that receive in order to help and help by the act of receiving. The Lord of all Creation put a towel about His loins and bathed His disciples' feet. Aristotle was right: we must keep our own essen-

tial worth; but that worth, that aristocracy of spirit, is revealed in a far higher nobility than that of the Aristotelian gentleman. Aristotle's gentleman was an aristocrat, a truly noble man; but there is a nobility that far transcends his greatness and fulfills his glory in a splendor unknown to the code of a limited and curtailed system of virtues. "But because Aristotle sees—as far as unaided human eyes can—the divinity inherent in human life; and develops it as far as it can go upon the construction of its mere humanity and its earthly limitations, I wish to take in through him all the truth upon that side. For indeed that is a side of the truth: it is only in realizing his own divinity that man can receive the aid and coöperation of the divinity without him: only God within us can make us responsive to God without us. If we are not God's children we cannot know Him as our Father, or share Him as our Life. On the other hand, the mere fact of our being Children of God by nature, *i.e.*, of our own natural divinity—will be nothing to us if we do not know Him as our Father and love Him as our Life, that is if we do not actualize the potential relation between us by realizing our Sonship."¹¹

¹¹op. cit., ch. 1.

ANTHOLOGIES OF MARS AND MIDAS

AMERICAN HARVEST: TWENTY YEARS OF CREATIVE WRITING IN THE UNITED STATES, edited by Allen Tate and John Peale Bishop, New York, L. B. Fisher, 1942. 544 pp. \$3.50.

MEN AT WAR: THE BEST WAR STORIES OF ALL TIME, edited by Ernest Hemingway, New York, Crown Publishers, 1942. 1072 pp. \$3.00.

The business of anthology-making in the past ten years has had much in common with the Klondike gold rush, so that one is never greatly surprised to find that his friends, even those he had thought immune from the fever, are staking out claims in the fields of the past and busily isolating literary nuggets. To drop a figure which is hardly worth its weight, and move on to the business of these pages, I suppose that most anthologies, including the fine pair under consideration, would fall into one or more of four general classes, which may be called respectively the critico-historical, the thematic, the bedside-companionable, and the tricksy or eccentric.

The two last may be quickly disposed of. Although the eccentric anthology is represented by some amusing collections, ranging from Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature* to the book on midgets called *It's A Small World*, it is strictly a hobby-horse genre, ridden for purposes of relaxation from the larger cares, or simply as a stunt, to see how long the compiler can stay in the saddle. The bedside-companionable category is one in which Messrs. Woolcott and Fadiman are reputed to excel, where the polite gentlemen lead you gently by the nose through their spacious libraries, hoping you will pay \$3.75 for this guidance, without much regard to demonstrable critical standards.

Altohugh a snap judgment might suggest that Messrs. Tate and Bishop have followed the rickety-rackety example of the less dependable gentlemen just mentioned, a careful survey of their anthology reveals that they have done nothing of the sort,—except once or twice. Critical standards were at work in the formation of their collection, and although they have chosen to dispense with the usual explanatory apparatus of the historico-critical anthology, they have gathered a sufficient number of first-

rate stories, poems, and critical essays to *represent*, with reasonable adequacy, the best which has been thought and said in these three areas of American artistry during the last twenty years. (To represent is not of course to exhaust, and if one is irked by the slightly "southern" bias in this collection, he need only be told to make himself another anthology with a "northern" bias; if he employs the same, or similar, critical standards, his anthology will be as good as this one.) I should judge that the criteria of Messrs. Tate and Bishop ran about as follows: Is this author worth including on the grounds that he is a serious artist as well as an accomplished craftsman, with something worth saying to say? Is this piece among the best he has done, and is it representative of all his best work? Does it exemplify his total manner, and typify his total method, and lose nothing by doing so? If the anthologist compels his selection to measure up to all these prerequisites, he need not worry much about historical values. The values will be implicitly there. Consider a few examples: Hemingway's *The Undefeated*, Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*, Faulkner, and typify his total method, and lose nothing by doing so? Cather's *Sculptor's Funeral*, Miss Gordon's *Captive*, Anderson's *The Egg*, Benét's folk-piece, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*; or the critical essays by Van Wyck Brooks, Blackmur, Wilson, and Eliot. The answer to the foregoing questions about any of these would always be in the affirmative. This work does exemplify the artist's way of looking at things, his way of telling about them; it is sound, serious, accomplished, moving. For these reasons it has historical value.

One could quarrel with some of the selections. Why the anecdotes by Weidman and Caldwell? Why the sonnet-bound writhings of Miss Millay? Why Saroyan? It may be these are sullen ground to set off bright metal. But the anthologist belongs properly—and continually—with Midas.

Mr. Hemingway long ago decided that he belonged properly if not continually with Mars, and this anthology of men at war is evidently a compromise between what Mr. Hemingway wanted to include, and what the times made it expedient to exclude;

between what Mr. Hemingway thought was sentimental trash, and what his publishers or nameless co-editors were set on putting in. It is a thematic anthology, and its theme is war. Insofar as it is a group effort, it falls short of the hopes of Mr. Hemingway; insofar as it falls short of his hopes, it corroborates his standards,—those (I mean) that underlie the best of his own writing.

The latest restatement of these standards is what renders valuable Hemingway's introduction to the anthology. "A writer's job," he says, "is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make it an absolute truth." Hemingway does not, of course, mean a transcendental absolute. He does mean something like unremitting conformity to the probable actual, that truth which is greater than the sum of its observed parts, the "news that stays news" because it is true both to itself and to its constituents, which feed but do not compel it. I wish that there were time and space to examine the ramifications of this point of view in relation to Hemingway's development, but the principle involved does make a good starting-point for the evaluation of *Men at War*.

Although relatively few of the selections conform to Hemingway's standards, the surprise is that so many should come so close. Among the two dozen which do conform, I should unhesitatingly include Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* (here given complete), Hemingway's account of El Sordo's last fight from *For Whom The Bell Tolls*; the extract from *Her Privates We*; the two episodes from Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*; one or two by Colonel Thomason; Stendhal's *Personal View of Waterloo*, Bierce's *Owl Creek Bridge*; Hillary's *Falling Through Space*, and perhaps a dozen others including one by Tolstoy. These twenty-odd are based on fact, accurately observed and recorded with the utmost fidelity, but illumined from within by a quality which goes beyond reporting as a good statue goes beyond stone.

They contain the general in the particular; experience is rather a referant than a comptroller. They have in common the factual flavor of eyewitness accounts, but have been matured by the artistic process beyond the level of reporting. They have shaped forms which are recognizable as actuality from rough blocks of carefully ascertained fact. Their matter, to put it one more way, is informed with spirit.

Many, if not most of the remaining stories are history, approaching the others at various levels and to various degrees of nearness, yet always remaining history, tied to particularized fact. The rewards they offer are various: information about the great battles; demonstration of the part played by chance, ignorance, stupidity, or forethought (or these in combination) in the outcome of world-shaking issues. It is odd how flat some of them seem beside the genuine works of art. But the art of writing, like the art of war, has come a long way since David slew Goliath.

CARLOS BAKER

RIVER ROGUE

RIVER ROGUE. By Brainard Cheney. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1942.
443 pp. \$2.50.

Except for Mark Twain and, after him, a few authors of light fiction who have written about the Mississippi, Southern novelists generally have let Southern rivers alone. An inveterate reader of Southern fiction, past and present, is entitled to feel himself well acquainted with almost every aspect of Southern life—but not the rivers. Unless he goes to special trouble and looks the subject up in obscure places, he will find out nothing about them. Not only are there few novels about Southern rivers; there are few books of any sort. The new "Rivers of America Series" is beginning to remedy the defect, in the field of non-fiction; but that is only a beginning, where the South is concerned. The lack seems odd, when you consider that the rivers were avenues of migration

and commerce all through the pioneer period, and that the great days of flatboat and keelboat lasted nearly up to the Civil War. Then came the great days of steamboating, when everybody used the steamboat freely, for railroads were still puny and incommodeous. Perhaps the improvement of railroads and the later use of automobiles have obscured this part of our experience as a people. Certainly it has passed out of our consciousness. The Mississippi remains to this day the only Southern river that figures prominently in literature. The Tennessee, the French Broad and the Broad, the New River, the Kanawha, the Kentucky, the Big Sandy, the Hiwassee, the Coosa, the Savannah, the Flint, the Tombigbee, and many more, remain unknown either in fiction or non-fiction.

But at last one gap is plugged, and brilliantly plugged, by Mr. Brainard Cheney. The scene of his second novel, *River Rogue*, is the Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers, of Georgia. The life depicted is the life of the raftsmen who drifted timber down these rivers to Darien, in the closing years of the nineteenth century. The leading character (among many salty characters) is Ratliff Sutton, nicknamed "Snake," an outcast white boy, a valiant and stubborn soul, so lost to family and clan that he has to live with negroes in the swamps of the Oconee. With Poss, his faithful negro companion, Snake Sutton goes out from the swamps to become a raftsmen and to learn the way of the river.

Snake grows up into a river type of the frontier hero. There is something of Mike Fink in him. Taunted by white men and called "albino nigger," he retorts by excelling his torturers in rough valor and in ingenious exploits, mechanical, combative, amorous, financial. Permitted to have a try at spearing a sturgeon, Snake ties the free end of the line around his waist and is dragged, gasping but unyielding, back and forth through the water. When Bud May knocks an alligator on the log raft while Snake is at the oar, Snake jumps on the alligator's back, rides it into the river, then gouges out the beast's eyes with his fingers. Cheated and robbed of his first raft by the bully, Diggs McMillan, he cherishes his revenge, and finally takes it in a hard front-

tier fight, in which he strips McMillan of his pants and bites off the end of his thumb while, from an upper story, China Swann, madame of a brothel, looks on in supreme fascination. From that time dates his conquest of his woman, China. This, like most of Snake's conquests, is a disreputable kind of triumph in its way, but it is impressive in the world to which Snake looks for prestige, and it is sufficient, until the panic of the Nineties, when the doings of another world, the world of money and politics, come emphatically to his attention. Snake tries to batter his way to prestige in that world too. He succeeds again, at least to the extent of accumulating money and contracting a real marriage with an aristocratic Charleston girl. But the marriage ends in tragedy, and Snake goes back, on the last page of the book, to the Oconee.

The novel is divided into three parts. The first, entitled "Poss," takes Snake Sutton through his boyhood experiences among the negroes and raftsmen, up to the point where he wins China and then loses his negro friend, Poss, in a river accident. The second part, entitled "China," has the river town of Darien as its principal scene, with much emphasis on China Swann's peculiar domain. The third part, entitled "Robbie," deals with Snake's quasi-respectable phase.

There is nothing better of its type, anywhere in modern fiction, than the narrative of the first part. Mr. Cheney's gifts are decidedly at their best when he presents rugged and unwashed characters in bold action out of doors. All the rafting scenes, all the episodes that engage Snake in some hardship from which he can emerge only by daring or muscle or native craft—all these are excellent, are beyond all criticism. They have the freshness that comes from a new subject-matter, a good story about a roguish hero, plainly and directly told. But the farther Mr. Cheney takes his hero from the Oconee and the Ocmulgee, the less intense the action becomes, the less spontaneous and easy is the narrative flow. China is interesting, and so are other characters. But having made a real hero in Snake Sutton, Mr. Cheney almost unmakes him, or almost loses him in the series of

brothel, town, and tavern scenes which seem to be elaborated without good reason.

And in the third phase of Snake's career, he seems quite another person; and that part of the book is almost another book, which is sketched rather than fully written. It is, no doubt, a logical extension of the story, but logic alone will not carry a story. The defect is very common in modern novels. After fine initial concentration, diffusion sets in, the novel becomes unmanageable, it is then broken off rather than ended. The novelist's capacity for dramatization does not keep pace with his capacity for logical extension. Possibly this defect, as a general phenomenon, comes from some failure of conviction about the subject that is being presented. In Mr. Cheney's instance, he had full conviction about the river and its people; and he was able to realize the first part of the book in the form of a story that is only a story, or above all a story, and a masterly one. For the rest, his conviction was incomplete; and so other elements than story elements tend to possess the narrative. It is a good joke on Darien and Charleston to have the swamp rat battling them and even beating them at their own game. But it is too bad that, in process of depicting the good joke, one must lose the man that Snake Sutton was on the river—a Huck Finn, a Mike Fink, or something just as good. But the fault is general, it is in the age as much as in Mr. Cheney, it may even be connected with notions that publishers have about how long a two dollar and a half novel ought to be.

At any rate, there is nothing else like *River Rouge* in modern American fiction. It comforts me to think about its being written and published in these days, when on the one hand we have had Mrs. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, in her *Yearling* and *Cross Creek*, offering us lye hominy versions of Southern life that seem to have come right out of a tin can; and on the other hand we have had Erskine Caldwell and his imitators, giving us a doctored whiskey version of Southern life, into which they have put anything they had around the house—rat-bane, hair tonic, rusty nails, roach powder, nail polish. Mr. Cheney's novel is nothing

like that. It is the genuine article; the real lye hominy, if you want it; the real whiskey, if you want whiskey. It is also an antidote to the two kinds of poison: soft poison and hard poison.

DONALD DAVIDSON

VICTORY THROUGH AIR POWER

VICTORY THROUGH AIR POWER. Major Alexander P. De Seversky, 1942. Simon and Schuster. 354 pp. \$2.50.

In the past few months this book has been repeatedly reviewed. More than that, it has been discussed—much discussed, and acrimoniously! That the author is a fanatic has been said so often that one almost automatically approaches the book with the expectation of having to discount much of it. A typical comment just the other day came from the mouth of a Major General. When asked if he had read Seversky's *Victory Through Air Power*, he replied, "Just a few pages of it here and there." "Of course," he went on, "the man is a radical. Perhaps someday they'll be able to do the things he talks about, but they haven't yet." This charge of overstatement has been made so often, and so vaguely, that it is time for something more specific to be said. If Seversky has made unwarranted claims, it is time that they were aired, brought out clearly into the light and thoroughly discredited. One thing is certain—this is an important book, by an important man*, on an important subject, and any "blanket" condemnation of it on the basis of the perusal of a few pages here and there is a very discreditable sort of trifling. The pur-

*Major Seversky was the leading Russian ace in the first World War. In 1918 he was selected as a member of the Russian Naval Aviation Mission to the United States. After Russia collapsed he was appointed aeronautical engineer for the United States government. After the war he became consulting engineer to the War Department. He founded the Seversky (now Republic) Aircraft Corporation, designed the first fully automatic bomb sight, built the fastest amphibian plane in the world, pioneered in the development of high altitude fighter planes, *et cetera*.

pose of this review is to put down in black and white the claims made by Seversky, and to try to see just what it is that "they haven't done yet," or precisely what are the radical or fanatical ideas with which the author may be reasonably charged.

For the sake of clarity I shall divide the book into four rather well demarcated sections: an introductory chapter of 27 pages; an historical section comprising the next three chapters (71 pages); an analytical section comprising the next six chapters (192 pages); and a constructive section comprising the last two chapters (60 pages).

The introductory chapter attempts to convince Americans of the possibility and probability of an air invasion of this continent despite our ocean ramparts unless we prepare adequately to prevent it. This possibility depends upon the construction of aircraft with sufficient range, which means 6000 miles or better. We may ask why our Navy would not stop them before they crossed the ocean. His reply is that these planes would not depend upon aircraft carriers, but would operate from continental bases which the Navy can not sink, and in crossing the ocean would fly at an altitude of 30,000 feet or higher (more than a mile above the effective range of anti-aircraft fire), and could ignore any navy of any size in the sea below. Furthermore, bomb sights would be accurate enough to permit effective bombing from that height, so that planes could do their work and return home without even being subjected to anti-aircraft fire from land or sea. Only an equal, or better, air force could stop them.

Is this a purely fanciful and fictitious danger, or is there any real reason to take it seriously? The best answer in this case is found not in the promises of aviation prophets, but in the performance of aircraft already constructed. The B-19 made by Douglas and the Glenn Martin flying boat each has a range of nearly 8,000 miles, each carries bomb loads of 18 tons (36 times as much as the German Stuka dive bombers), each operates well above 30,000 feet. These planes, which have already been constructed and tested (though not ordered in numbers), could easily leave New York next week, bomb an objective anywhere in

Europe, and return. Furthermore, bomb sights have already been constructed with a precision of 10 minutes of arc, which means from 30,000 feet a lineal error of approximately 100 feet on the ground. Even with crude manipulation the bombs should fall within a circle of 300 feet radius. The wingspread of the B19 is 200 feet. By locating the bombs in the wings a salvo pattern of 100 feet could be provided; and by releasing them in series this pattern could be extended 600 or 700 feet in the direction of flight. A formation of several such bombers at 30,000 feet altitude ought to be able to cover any battleship 100 feet wide by 600 feet long with a pretty thick pattern of direct hits.

Why aren't we already bombing Europe from New York? Simply because these bombers have not been ordered. Mr. Martin has even offered to build, any time he has an order for it, a bomber which will carry 40 tons of explosive to any part of Europe, and return. But even ignoring the promise, the B19 and the big Martin flying boats already made could carry nearly 20 tons each over the same route. The cost of one modern carrier (approximately \$50,000,000) could provide 50 B19's which could deliver 1000 tons of explosives, or twenty times as much as all the bombers on the carrier. These are not prophecies, but simple facts already demonstrated.

The historical section of the book is an account of the invasion of Norway, the battle of Dunkirk, the battle of Britain, the earlier North African campaigns, the invasion of Crete, and the sinking of the *Bismarck*. There are no prophecies in this section. There is merely the recounting of cold, historical facts. How well we all remember Chamberlain's exultant cry when the invasion of Norway began, "This time Hitler missed the bus." It seemed so clear that the British Navy, which assembled in overwhelming numbers in the North Sea, could easily blockade the Scandinavian peninsula and trap the German troops in Norway. But how quickly the exultation subsided when Hitler's control of the skies obliged the naval forces to withdraw in haste first from the Kattegat and then from the Skagerrak; and finally, as soon as airports were obtained within striking distance of Narvik and other Brit-

ish occupied ports, the British land forces had to be withdrawn also.

The story of Dunkirk was similar but with the air under Britain's control. The British land-based fighters with a striking radius of only 150 miles could not cross the North Sea, but the English channel was another matter. Here they provided a safe canopy under which the evacuation of Dunkirk was successfully accomplished. They held the skies in this case, not because of numbers, but because of quality. The British fighters were faster and more heavily armed than the German, so that they made up in quality what they lacked in quantity—more than made up, for the subsequent battle of Britain they defeated the *Luftwaffe* and thus prevented the land invasion. Without control of the sky the Germans could not, and did not attempt to, invade the land.

The scope of this review will not permit detailed summary of all the historical passages, but the battle of Crete can not be passed over without a word. The British had the sea, and the Germans had the air, and the Germans won. It was as clear a demonstration as could be asked for, that a powerful navy is helpless if the air belongs to the enemy. The British themselves conceded that lack of aerial defense necessitated the abandonment of the island.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the legend of invincibility of battleships to air attack has been removed from the realm of opinion by the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* and the tragedy of Pearl Harbor. Of course, General Mitchell had performed the crucial experiment two decades ago off Newport News, but the battleship which he sank was an old one. The *Prince of Wales* was not.

So much for the historical section. The analytical section might perhaps, have been shortened with profit. It gives the impression of being somewhat disadvantageously repetitious. It is difficult, of course, to judge just how far repetition for the sake of emphasis can be allowed before device defeats its purposes by causing the reader to lose interest and stop reading. Perhaps

the shortcomings of this section are the result of compilation from earlier magazine articles by the same author. At any rate, one has the impression that the argument could have been enhanced by briefer treatment. But Chapter VI includes a very clear summary of eleven conclusions based upon the historical evidence and constituting the author's main contentions. Three of these can be included under others, leaving eight mutually exclusive propositions. These are: (1) No land or sea operations are possible without control of the air above. This is merely what has been demonstrated in Norway, Dunkirk, Crete. It is why MacArthur was not relieved at Bataan, why the continent of Europe has not been invaded by allied land troops; and it is the basis of all the fluctuating campaigns of North. In this war not a single offensive has succeeded in the face of enemy control of the air. (2) Only air power can defeat air power. This is self evident if battleplanes can carry out their work above the range of anti-aircraft fire, which is the case. (3) Land based aviation is always superior to shipborne aviation. On account of the necessity of landing and of taking off from a limited deck space, shipborne aircraft must be encumbered with special mechanisms, and limited in size, range, and load. Furthermore, the carrier is the most vulnerable part of the fleet, violating as it does the principle of dispersal; and when one is sunk, all of its planes are lost, both those within it and those without, the latter on account of their short range being generally totally dependent upon it for a base. (4) The striking radius of air power must be equal to the maximum dimensions of the theater of operations. That this is desirable is obvious. That its neglect has been a significant factor in this war is abundantly illustrated. But the point to which he gives most emphasis is the possibility and advisability of dispensing with intermediate bases (both floating and insular) and constructing planes which can fly directly from the United States to any of its enemies and return. Certainly if we had done this before the war we could have started attacking Japan and Germany on a large scale long ago instead of waiting for the slow process of capturing intermediate bases one at a

time. (5) In aerial warfare quality is more important than quantity. In the Battle of Britain the *Luftwaffe* had quantity, and the R.A.F. had quality, and the R.A.F. won. The Spitfires had an 8 to 1 fire advantage over the Heinkel bombers, and were faster than any of the Messerschmidts, as well as more heavily armed. In one phase of the battle the Nazis lost at least 562 aircraft at a cost of only 119 to the British. (6) Aircraft must be specialized for their jobs. This is due to the fact that an increase in any one of the primary factors, speed, range, altitude, and load capacity (including armor and armament) necessarily involves a sacrifice in others. (7) Destruction of morale can be accomplished only by precision bombing. The panic expected to follow indiscriminate bombing has not been great enough to warrant the cost. The will to resist can be broken only by destruction of essentials. (8) The principle of unity of command applies to the air as well as to the land and sea. This is discussed more fully in the constructive section.

The last section includes a detailed criticism of our own military aircraft and an elaborate plan for the reorganization of our air command. Many of the faults in particular planes have been removed or reduced in models produced since the book was written. The fire power of the B-17 and the B-26 has been enormously increased. The P-38 and the P-47 have provided what the P-40 lacks in ability to operate at high altitudes. The limitations which still exist in range and in fire power are imposed by the will of the purchasers, not by the capacity of the producers. The argument in respect to organization I shall not attempt to evaluate in detail. But if we intend to produce only short range planes not capable of acting in any but an accessory capacity, then obviously the most efficient organization involves leaving the Air Force split into subsidiary branches of the Army and Navy. It seems equally clear, however, that if we construct the kind of planes he suggests, and wage the kind of war he recommends, there would be no more sense in making the Air Force subsidiary to the Army or Navy than *vice versa*. But even if all of this side of the argument were omitted, the wealth of unfamiliar and crucially signifi-

cant facts which the book contains would make it of great value; and the charge of gross exaggeration seems scarcely substantiated by anything I have been able to uncover in a rather careful reading.

EDWARD McCRADY, JR.

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES

A TIME FOR GREATNESS. By Herbert Agar. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1942.
301 pp. \$2.50.

This is not a book for those concerned essentially with the immediate problems of winning the war, liquidating the Nazi enemies, and restoring the good old order of business as usual, the day when America seemed to us "a gigantic department store" of abundance, free enterprise, and permanent prosperity. The author advocates a return to Greatness in individual and social affairs; he asks that we regain our spiritual dignity as men and Americans, win back our religious traditions and our ethical inwardness.

Mr. Agar is frankly presenting a thesis which he describes as optimistic, conservative, and moral. His book, by its inspiration, is essentially a layman's preachment, vigorous and serious in tone. It is an attack upon our loss of morals and principles: we do not practice the liberties we presume to cherish, do not honor the equalities which are written into our basic political documents, and we neglect the fraternities of communal life in the bitter struggle for our livelihood. Altogether we have betrayed our heritage of human rights "by taking them lightly." The author, therefore, calls for a national regeneration, for creative conservatism in all social relations, for national controls and planning in the interests of true and abiding citizenship. In our foreign relations, he calls for a new coöperation and responsibility; specifically, he means that we must renounce in this war all idea

of a financial settlement in money or in goods, and that we must continue in the post-war world the lend-lease organization and machinery for relief and rehabilitation everywhere, in order to build a world from which all may benefit. Behind this recommendation we see the author's complete agreement with the President's "four freedoms" and Henry Wallace's concept of "a people's war." The whole moral passion of Mr. Agar is concentrated on the demand for a living, creative, regenerating Idea. He concludes: "There is nothing worth fighting for except an idea, for it alone can last, can provide a basis for the developing future. Touch the American tradition anywhere, in any speech or document or song or ritual, and the same 'explosive idea' emerges, the one force we know that Hitler fears, the idea of *all men*."

There is no gainsaying the power, the justice, and the beauty of Mr. Agar's appeal. It is exciting; it goes down with the reader. On the other hand, the book is lacking in understanding and awareness of the forces of good and evil. These forces are not two distinct categories; they are intermingled. It does not follow that by renouncing evil we automatically embrace the good. We are beset with difficulties new in modern civilization, and no simplification would give us the desired social cohesion of thought and action. Our present confusion only confirms the belief that a high civilization makes our problems more difficult and dangerous, for to keep what we have gained in civilization requires more intelligence and courage than was required to win it in the first place. At the same time, it is the nature of human intelligence to become active in finding reasons for evading our difficulties. Then, too, the passage from idea to action is not automatic in the moral world; the distance between theory and practice is much longer and more dangerous than in science, technology, or business. Therefore, in a simpler civilization, it was possible to trust oneself to the power of moral ideas and work out some social fulfillment. But something more is needful today, in addition to the power of ideas, something more than fervid appeal and the call to tradition, if we are to build a new world for "all men." The forces about us are both good and evil, interwoven; we are a

crowd, and therein lies our confusion. We are not a marshalled host working together with coördination and precision. Our order is not the order of moving forces, moving in faith and harmony towards definite ends. And thus it comes about that we do not have that habit of spontaneous discipline by which the habit of coöperation enters the blood stream of man and society. It is dangerous and naïve to overlook the actual absence of common objectives, order and discipline, and the means to effect them, and rely too fondly and exclusively on the creative power of ideas evoked out of the past. Revivalism is too often followed by extreme relaxation, moral fatigue and indifference.

EUGENE M. KAYDEN

CONFEDERATE RAIDER

MORGAN AND HIS RAIDERS: A Biography of the Confederate General. By Cecil Fletcher Holland. MacMillan. New York, 1942. 373 pp. \$3.50.

In nineteen remarkably interesting chapters Mr. Holland has undertaken to set down the sad, proud record of those who came from the North and abroad and all over the South to ride with John Morgan as their forbears once rode in the border wars of England and Scotland and Wales. This spirited story—which this reviewer was fortunate enough to hear long ago of men who had left other commands to follow General Morgan—the author begins in the year 1862, when the subject of his study was already mature. By weaving back and forth, however, he manages to include in his tapestry of events not only an arresting picture of this almost legendary Confederate general, but also of the larger scene about him. And to substantiate his interpretation of what happened to Morgan's men and the South—and perhaps to our whole era as well—during the fateful years under discussion Mr. Holland is able, by right of discovery, to fall back

on the official and personal correspondence of the General himself. From this abundant source he has drawn the accounts here presented, as it is to be hoped that, in good time, he will also edit and publish the whole series of documents.

In attempting to estimate the quality and character of such informal history as is contained in this biography, one must bear in mind the singular fact that, in writing of the American past, a good many native-born scholars seem to be afflicted (as an old trailsman recently remarked in a sober gathering of *literati*) with stiff necks—and even stiffer pens. In contrast to this remote and chill treatment of our history, one must also recall, if one can bear to do so, that chatty and super-colloquial style which so many more or less popular modern biographers affect. Between these two dangers Mr. Holland has picked his way carefully.

That is not to say, of course, but that one might argue with him about this or that issue or citation or omission. In place of so meticulous an approach, however, this reader is inclined to suggest that few contemporary students of Southern history have been so successful in achieving that vital sense of the past which, as Rilke says in one of his sonnets, reveals it to be but “ever-flowing time.” This discerning understanding of the living quality of history Mr. Holland brings to his task, as appears on more than a few pages, notably in his discussion of the last days of the Confederacy as related to certain continuing aspects of Southern *mores*.

Furthermore, his characters—even his minor characters like that Englishman who wore a red skull-cap in battle or that Texan who would rather fight than freeze—are drawn with a truly tragic sense of why such men as these were bound to disappear as the dinosaurs disappeared with the changing climate of the world. Furthermore, Mr. Holland knows in his bones, as almost no statistician does, that, no matter how varied the geography and economic conditions of an area, it may, nevertheless, possess a sound and fundamental unity if its people carry about in them the same set of memories, and traditions. This point, which Mr. Avery Craven emphasizes in his recent study of the

same period, Mr. Holland also discusses with admirable insight as he comes to the latter part of General Morgan's life.

In addition, he has kindly supplied his readers with both an adequate index and with a variety of those lively facts about food, clothing, and manners for which novelists so often search in vain through the pages of professional historians.

LAURA KREY

LEE'S LIEUTENANTS

A STUDY IN COMMAND

LEE'S LIEUTENANTS. By Douglas Southall Freeman. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1942. 773 pp. \$5.00.

Lee's Lieutenants is the first of four volumes to be written as a companion piece to Freeman's *R. E. Lee*. Naturally no final judgment can be passed on an incomplete work; there are, however, certain things to be said. First of all, the material by its very nature is difficult to concentrate and direct. By reporting the action of subordinates, their rise and fall, within their immediate spheres of performance, the author of necessity concerns himself with too much detail. He must constantly shift his attention from division to division, even from brigade to brigade. The reader is like a visitor at the front. He sees only one segment at a time; and, since he sees principally through the eyes of these subordinates and only occasionally through the eyes of the coördinator, the commander, he finds it hard to focus on the campaigns as a whole. There is analysis but no satisfactory synthesis. This was not true of Freeman's military biography of Lee. There you watched the general officers perform organically. They were viewed in perspective, through the commander's eye, each officer a functioning part of a whole. With his present method the author has in a sense committed himself to an im-

possible task. He would require the omniscience of the Creator of battles to arrive at the full and complete truth from so dispersive a method, especially under the fog of war. But in collecting the source material on the battles in Virginia he has performed an invaluable service.

It cannot be denied, however, that Freeman's fog of war theory is a valuable innovation. It has added a great deal to the writing of military biography. Proposing to reproduce as nearly as possible the conditions under which the commander has to make his decisions, it dramatizes the strategy of campaign and the tactics of battle. No other method has been quite so successful as this, but again, and particularly in the *Lieutenants*, one would like to be omniscient at moments and observe more of the ponderables of war, especially of the enemy's situation and numbers. The artful inclusion of such information ought not to lessen the dramatic suspense. Granted such a loss, one must remember that the author is after all writing history, not reporting a contemporary battle or campaign.

Freeman's method resembles loosely what might be called the stream of consciousness for history. Strictly governed, such a method promises the most authoritative and interesting treatment of the complexities of war. But more than ever is it necessary for the author to understand his own limitations, his stubborn enthusiasms, lest he be misled in the choice and shaping of his material. One cannot help but feel in the study under consideration that both Johnston and Beauregard are too easily underestimated as commanders, one by his bombastic speech and sanguine Latin temperament, the other for more complicated reasons. Even Jackson's Valley Campaign is discounted by an adverse criticism of this general's tactics, his secrecy, and the treatment of his subordinates.

These were the early days of the war. This we are told, but the author's judgment of his subjects does not in every case equally take into account the matter of time. At Seven Pines the reader is led to feel that failure there was due largely to Johnston, while during the Seven Days it was not so much the fault

of the commander, Lee, as it was the errors of his lieutenants. For example: Longstreet took the wrong road at Seven Pines. This costly error is laid upon Johnston. Certainly Johnston assumed responsibility, but so did Lee for Longstreet's insubordination at Gettysburg. There is no doubt in the reader's mind why Lee failed to report Longstreet's insubordination, nor is there any doubt concerning Longstreet's behavior; but at Seven Pines, there is doubt where the ultimate responsibility should be placed. In the Valley Campaign it is explained to us that Jackson took foolish tactical risks and failed many times to coördinate the various branches of the service to gather the full reward of victory. So persuasive is the author we have to reflect that, after all, Jackson did win the battles and did gain the fullest measure of success from his strategy. It is legitimate to criticize Jackson's tactics but not without taking into consideration the War Department and Jackson's own temperament.

One other thing. Every proposal to invade enemy territory by generals other than Lee is made suspect, even ridiculously optimistic, and once in Jackson's case almost insubordinate. Freeman substantiates his position by referring to the immediate situation. This indicates the flaw of his method. The reader needs to know more. A question of invasion cannot be determined until the general strategy has also been taken into consideration. Such a course would go beyond the fog of the immediate situation. More of Confederate history would have to be understood, the situation in the enemy's country, many other things, and certainly a critical appraisal of the Richmond government's dispersive defensive.

ANDREW LYTHE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

JOHN WILD, the author of *George Berkeley*, is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. He serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Phenomenology* and is a member of the Scholars' Guild of the Episcopal Church.

WALLACE STEVENS was born in Reading, Pennsylvania in 1879. Educated at Harvard and entered the law. A vice-president of the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company. He appears in *The American Harvest*, reviewed in this issue of the *Sewanee Review*. Author of: *Harmonium*, 1923; *Ideas of Order*, 1935; *Owl's Clover*, 1936; *The Man With the Blue Guitar* and *Other Poems*, 1937, and more recently, *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction*.

GEORGE MARION O'DONNELL teaches English at Alabama Polytechnic Institute. Contributed to the Agrarian-Distributist symposium, *Who Owns America*. He has appeared in *Five Young Poets*, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, and *Poetry*.

WILLIAM MEREDITH, Ensign U. S. Naval Air Corps. Educated at Princeton. Formerly a reporter for *The New York Times*. Has contributed to *Verse Between Two Wars* and the *New Republic Supplement: Writers Under Thirty*.

ARTHUR MIZENER is Professor of English at Wells College, Aurora, New York. He has contributed critical articles to *The Southern Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Sewanee Review*, and other periodicals.

CARLOS BAKER is an instructor in English at Princeton University.

LOUIS O. COXE, now serving with the United States Navy, was formerly an instructor at Phillips-Exeter Academy.

CLEANTH BROOKS, one of the editors of *The Southern Review*, now associate editor of *The Kenyon Review* and *The Sewanee Review*, is Professor of English at Louisiana State University. Author of: *Modern Poetry and the Tradition, Approach to Literature*; co-author with Robert Penn Warren of *Understanding Poetry* and a book now in preparation, *Understanding Fiction*.

STUART GERRY BROWN is Professor of Literature and Philosophy at Grinnell College. He has contributed articles both to scholarly and critical journals. Author of: *We hold These Truths*; co-author with Wright Thomas of *Reading Poems*.

Roy P. BASLER teaches English at State Teacher's College, Florence, Alabama.

LEROY LEATHERMAN, whose first published story appears in this issue, was educated at Vanderbilt University and Kenyon College. He is now serving in the United States Army.

ALEXANDER GUERRY is Vice-Chancellor of The University of the South.

DUNCAN KENNER BRENT, scholar at large, is now serving with the United States Army.

MEDFORD EVANS is Assistant Professor of English at The University of the South.

JOHN S. MARSHALL is Professor of Philosophy at Albion College, Michigan. Author of, in collaboration with Professor N. O. Lossky; *Value and Existence*.

DONALD DAVIDSON is Professor of English at Vanderbilt University. A member of the Fugitive-Agrarian group of poets and writers. Author of: *The Tall Men*, *Lee in the Mountains* and other works in prose and poetry. His most considerable critical work is *The Attack on Leviathan*.

EDWARD McCRADY, JR., is Professor of Biology at The University of the South.

EUGENE M. KAYDEN, Professor of Economics at The University of the South, has appeared recently in *The Sewanee Review* as the author of original verse and of translations of Pushkin.

LAURA KREY, novelist, author of *And Tell of Time* and other works.

182

by Robert Penn Warren

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM

I

SHERIFF'S OFFICE,
THE JAIL,
MURCASTER COUNTY.

THE pore human man, he ain't nuthin but a handful of dust, but the light of God's face on him and he shines like a diamint, and blinds the eye of the un-uprighteous congregation Dust, hit lays on the floor, under the goin-forth and the comin-in, and ain't nuthin, and gits stirred up under the trompin, but a sun-beam come in the dark room and in that light hit will dance and shine for heart-joy. I laid on the floor, and hit was dark. I wasn't nuthin. I was under the trompin, which was cruel-hard. But a man don't know, fer he is ignorant. There ain't nuthin in him but meaness and a hog-holler and emptiness for the world's slop. A man don't think of nuthin but sloppin, and dodgen, when the kick comes. I laid on the floor, and didn't know, and the trompin. But the light come in the dark room, like a finger a pointin at me through the hole, and it was the hard trompin had stirred me. I shined in the light.

It was so, and truth sober. Then, that time, and for a long time, me goin or stayin, on dry land or the river. Oh, Lord, make me to be shinin agin, and do not turn away yore face. For I have spelled how hit is writ, and water come sweet from the smote stone, and light in the dark place.

But a man don't know, nor was made to. Salvation has laid hid behind a dark bush, like a enemy man up to meaness and waitin for him was comin, when the moon had got down under the ridge. Hit holds out hit's hand, and there ain't no sayin what

is in hit. A stickin-knife or a five-dollar bill. But the Lord, he made the world and what walks on hit, and hit out of pure love. The copperhead, and him layin for sun in the path where the women-folks and the children goes down to the spring for water. And the wicked man in his power of meanness, he puts out his hand, and he don't know, but the Lord's love is in hit, in a far country, and hit only retches out to lay holt and come home. He figgers he's grabbin for the toys and garnishments and the vain things which is his heart's desire, but hit ain't so. The Lord's love in him is retchen out for the light of the Lord's face, and is pore and peaked like a potato-sprout in a dark cellar, where the sun don't come. But the Lord's love in him, hit knows what hit hones for. Hit's him what is ignorant, and deceit laid on his eyes like a blind-folt at a play-party, and him retchen out to lay holt.

Take Pearl. She et and lay down in the house of the abominations, and hit was the roof of that house kept the rain offen her. But the time come, and hit never kept out the light of His face. They ain't no ridge-pole hewed nor shingle split, red oak nor white, will do hit, when the time comes. Her hand retched out to lay holt. It was my blessedness to be standin there. The Lord led me, and he laid the words on my tongue. I named them, and hit was ample. She come down the river with me and mine, frost or the hot sun, freshit or drout and the mud stinken when we tied up. We all broke bread and taken our sop in rejoicin.

I done what was moved in me. What I knowed to do. And what I wouldn't know, hit may be, to do different and hit to do agin. I figured on telling her of salvation, and us movin and rejoicin, which we done. And now she lays there, and the dungeon-key turned in the lock, and her heart is full of hate. She won't un-squinch her eyes, they say, nor take sup nor morsel. How does a man know, not made to? She retched out her hand to lay holt on salvation, and done hit, back in Hulltown. Her hand retched out that night, and hit has retched nigh three years, and laid holt on that old squirrel rifle.

If I hadn't never come, and named the words on my tongue, she would been there yet, and hit the house of abominations, but her face smilin. Salvation, what good has hit done her? She taken off one sin, lak a man his shirt sweat-dirty, and flung hit down, but she has done swapped one Bible-sin for another, and hate in her heart, and the cold stone wall round and about where she lays down. And my wife and them what follered and trusted me, movin on the river, they is come amongst strangers, and the bitterness. God's will, hit runs lak a fox with the dogs on him, and doubles, and knows places secret and hard for a man's foot. But a man wants to know, but hit is his weakness. He lays in the night, when the Lord has done turned away His face, and he worries his head and shakes his mind lak a tree, but what fruit falls, hit is tart-lak and wries up the tongue. He looks back on what is done. He tries to see hit lak hit was, and recollect. But hit don't do no good. Remembrance is lak the smoke what still hangs over the rifle-barril, but the squirrel fallin, bumpin the limbs. Oh Lord, I have laid down in the night.

They treat me good. I ain't got nuthin agin them here. They is doin accordin to their lights. If they turn the key in the lock, hit ain't in man-meaness. Hit is laid on them so. They told me to tell them all what happened, and hit would be more easy. They said tell them and they'd put hit down, and hit would help Pearl when the time come. And help me. But me, what help I need, hit ain't in feeble man to give. But I said, I would give testifyin for the Lord. I would write hit down myself, I said, for a man can't say hit all at once, how hit was. Sometimes hit comes when a man ain't thinkin. Hit comes before you lak you was there, and hit daylight but gone in a blink. So they give me paper and ink and a pen staff. I will put hit down, spare not, fear nor favor, and I will write hit as fair as I can. . .

II

. . . I was born and had my raisin in the County of Custiss, which is a good country yit if a man can git him a patch of bot-

tom or on the hill before the washin and rain-scourin commences. But hit ain't what hit was before the change of time, lak in the days of my grandpappy, who was a old one but spry and his hand never shook and him nigh ninety, when I was a sprout. He told me how hit was, ground idle for the takin and clearin, or slashin and burnin, and the timber there for a man's axe to square and lay for his four walls, when he left his pappy's and taken him a wife. And the woods full of varmints yit, and squirrels fat in the trees, lak apples when the limb bends, and turkeys gabblin whar the sun broke through to a open place where they taken forage. And the skillet never groaned empty, he said, save once in a spell when the Lord laid down His hand on man's neglectful pride, and a woman's never had to grabble in the lard-barril nor a man's gut rumble dry and the young uns standin round about, big-eyed for the famish. Which I seen, and not me only.

But come the change of time and newfangledness, with the ground wore out and the washin, hit ain't what hit was, lak my grandpappy named hit. My grandpappy was a godly man when I knowed him and had been a long time, he said, but there was a time he stood amongst the scoffers and scorers or lay down in the bushes to lewdness and carnal carryins-on. There was always sin and human meaness in Custiss, and he never said no contrary, but now they is churches in Custiss with the door done sagged off the hinges and the weather beats in where the roof leaks and sassafrass and elder quick-growin where folks used to stand and talk before the bell rung, and in the walkin-cut season, not even waitin for dark and hit more decent, they is abominations under the ridge-pole of the Lord's house. I know hit because I misbehaved and put my immortal soul in danger, but for the mercy, and I sweat in the night for it yit. And what churches they is in Custiss ain't full lak I seen when I was a young un, women and old folks now and the children too little for devilmint, and the men folks too few so you don't much hear a good bass-burden to the song worship. Folks has got one eye cocked hot after lewdness and the other on the almighty dollar,

and the Lord, He has seen and has laid down his hand, for He is the Lord God and is a jealous God, lak hit is writ. Times hard in Custiss and misery, and folks lays the blame on one thing and another, how the ground's done washed and the rich folks done bought up or took the country for the timber or the coal down under the mountains, but they forgot the Lord God and how He don't have to be huntin for a stick to lay on the bare back of wickedness. What comes to His hand is His, and His hand clever past runnin or hidin.

They is good folks in Custiss yit, I ain't denyin, but for the blindness. My mammy was good and feared God. My pappy was a good man and stout for work and providin, and he never did my mammy no meaness, but for likker and fightin. He couldn't take nuthin off no man hit looked lak. He was good, but he was not God-fearin and never taken his sins to Jesus, not for all mammy prayin and pleadin. He died sudden and hit nigh dinner time, and the vittles what had been put in the pot for him scorchin on the stove. He went out in the mornin and put his axe to the tree, and the tree what looked true, hit slipped and back-bucked of a sudden. The butt hit pappy on the side of the head. The men brung him to the house and laid him on the bed, him breathin but his eyes closed. Mammy prayed by the bed, and the folks washed the blood off. He opened his eyes one time, and hit looked lak they would pop out of his head, and they went wild around the room like birds what batters to git out when they done flew in the house. Then he was dead, and gore blood on the piller. Him buried, Mammy set in a cheer for three days, nor said nuthin. Then at night time and the third day she stood in the floor, and us young uns looked at her. He died a saved man, she said. Jesus give me salvation, and I'll never see him agin. Oh, what to pray for, and me a woman ignerant and weak. Then the tears come, and for the first time, quick as a freshit. And we put her in the bed. The next mornin she et a little somethin.

My mammy was a Porsum, and they was good folks and clever. What they laid hand to, good or bad howsobeit, they taken

hit hard. They was wicked men amongst them, but they never had no name for corner meaness, and folks give them a name for drivin a true furrow, once they set to hit. My mammy was a cousin to Private Porsum, what was in the big war over the other side of the ocean and made a name for himself and for Custiss that folks can read in the books. He was quiet talkin, they said, for I never seen him but one time, and he testified in the churches for salvation, but he was a man with a rifle you never seen the lak of, nor nobody in Custiss. He come back from the war, and there was big carryins-on over him in New York and in Washington, and in the city, and folks standin in the streets half a day, not workin nor nuthin, to see him come ridin past in a automobile, settin with ginrals and senators and sich. And him Private Porsum from Custiss. They wanted to make him a officer and put trimmins on his coat, but he said, naw, he was Private Porsum, and he had not done nuthin but what come to his hand, and what air man would, with God's help to uphold him. And they named him Private Porsum. He was book clever, and when he come back from the war he went to the Legislature. He done good there, and after a while he never come back to Custiss much except to be makin speeches. He has got him a little place up in Custiss yit, where he goes to be huntin and fishin, but he has got him a big house down nigh the city, here. My mammy was his cousin and blood-kin, and me. But the Wyndhams, my pappy's folks, was good folks, too.

The Porsums laid hand to the plow and held on, and my mammy never was one to be turnin and laggin. She done what she could, and reared us in sweat and God's name. I seen her barefoot in the field and the plow lines hung over her neck like a man, and her humped to hit, afore us young uns was big enuff. And her not no big woman, and slight-made. I seen her, nights after she done put us to bed and me the biggest layin wakeful, I seen her settin weavin or patchin and the fire so low she squinched to see, or plaitin them hickory baskits, to sell in the settlemint. I shet my eyes for sleep, her settin there the last thing in them. We growed up and done what we could, and

taken over the plowin. She did not work in the field no more, but to chop corn when we got in a tight and the grass taken a strangle holt after the wet. But she never was no sluggart, and taken no ease, with times hard till the day the women folks come in to wash her and I heard the hammer in the shed where they put the nails in and made her box staunch-tight.

Jacob my brother, he laid holt on Jesus afore mammy shet her eyes on day, and hit was a joy for her. But me, I never and I groan to deny hit to her. Hit was not in me, for blindness. I worked and done, but Saturday toward sun, hit was me down the big road, and many is the time I come back the dew done dried on a Sunday. Lak yore pappy, Ashby, she said to me, a hand for gallivantin and revellin, and him dead in the dark past Jesus' sight. He would not take nuthin offen no man, and the strong man is done brought low. Her heart grieved. And what she said last, and her lips blue lak a vilet, was to name my salvation. Ashby, she said, and tried to lift up her hand what was feeble on the cover, lay holt while hit is yit day. I stood there. My heart in my bosom, hit was lak flint rock for hardness and sharp edges cuttin, but I could not git out a word nor a tear to the eye socket. I tried to retch out and tetch the foot-board of the bed where she was layin, lak that was sumethin to do. But my arms was lak frozen. Hit was the last she said, and then the black vomit.

I seen three die mortal on that bed, and me standin there. My pappy, lost and his eyes poppin, and my mammy, safe in Jesus, and that pore old man, the Frencher, wayfarin and far from home, comin off the big road and died amongst strangers. Hit was a time after my mammy was done gone, and Jacob and me lived there and made out, him livin by Jesus' word and me hittin off ever Saturday with my hat cocked on the side of my head and lookin for what mought be. Hit was gittin along in August, and the sun not down yit and the day was a scorchin. I come round the corner of the house from the wood-pile, my arm full of stove wood, and I seen a wagin comin up, and Jacob a walkin afore hit. I went on in and throwed down them stove lengths,

and heard Jacob callin. I went out there, and Jacob was pickin up a old man out of the wagin. He handled him lak he was nuthin for lightness, him wropped up in a old quilt and his arms ploppin out to drag down. His eyes was open, but he never looked at nobody nor noticed, but he looked up at the sky and never blinked. Then him was drivin the wagin jumped down and come runnin round to the old man, and leaned over to grab holt of the old man's hand, and the big old straw hat fell off, and I seen hit was a woman, not more than a gal, and long black hair come undone and tumblin down. Then Jacob yelled fretful at me standin there gapin, Hit's a pore old man sick to die, and you standin there. Git the bed ready. And I done hit.

Jacob had done met them down the road, and the gal ast him where to git some drinkin water for the old man sick. So Jacob brung them in, lak air man would, and him Christian. We put him in the bed, where had laid the saved and the unsaved to taste the bitterness. We unwrapped that old quilt offen him, and hit dirty from the journeyin, and taken off his pants and shirt. There was not no meat to him, for the wastin and fever, and the skin hung off him lak a tow sack hung on a barb wire fence. The gal washed off his face and hands, and give him water to sup, but he never said nuthin. He laid there. He had a white beard, and his head was bald like a punkin on top, and yeller, with white hair bristlin off the sides. His eyes was blue lak a baby's, and he looked up to the ceiling, and hit the house of the stranger, where he had done come all that way and all that time, from Canady, whar they is the deep snow.

The gal never said a word. She set there and leaned towards him and had holt of his hand. She did not cry, but they was dust from the journeyin on her cheeks, and you could see how the tears had done come down from her eyes and made streakin down her face. Her comin down the road in the wagin, and the old man layin there, and the sun bearin down, and the tears come down from her eyes. She set there till he was dead, after Jacob had got the doctor from Cashville. He was a gone goslin, the doctor said, and taken his leave. Hit was nigh midnight

when Jacob come with the doctor, and he did not stay no time to speak of after he looked at the old man. Hit was toward day the old man crossed over. That gal did not cry none. She looked at his face for a minute real hard. She still had holt of his hand, lak all that time. Then she put her head down on his chist and let hit lay. She shet her eyes, and for all you could say, she mought been asleep, and her hair loose over his chist. I taken a look at her, and I went outside and stood there lookin off towards Massey Mountain. The first day was comin over the mountain, the sky there the color of blue-johnny spilt, and the mountain black under hit.

They is good folks in Custiss and they taken holt. They buried that pore old man and was Christian kind to Marie, which was that gal's name. Old Mrs. Marmaduke, who had the place next ouren, she taken her in for four days, till she got ready to leave. She was goin on, she said, to some place where she could git some work. She had been headin south, she said, to git the old man where hit would be warm in the winter time, lak she had heard tell. They had been comin down a long time, she said, nigh four years, stoppin and workin to git a little somethin to eat, and movin on. She mought as well keep on goin that way, she said, not havin nobody of kin nor kind. She would make out, she said.

The mornin she was leavin, I got up and started out the door and towards the gate. Whar you goin? Jacob said. I didn't say nuthin, but kept on goin. I went down the road toward Marmaduke's. I got to a place whar you can see the house, then I squatted down lak a man will to take his ease. I seen smoke comin out the chimney, and knowed they was stirrin, if haven a name for late risin. A time, and Old Man Marmaduke brung the wagin out, and I seen that gal Marie come out, and Mrs. Marmaduke. That gal was wearin a dress now, lak she done after her pappy died. Then I seen her put her valise up in the wagin, and git up, and the wagin start rollin, and the folks wavin after her. Then Old Mrs. Marmaduke went in and Old Man Marmaduke went off toward the shed. I moved down the road

a piece, round the bend, and squatted down, where the cedars was.

She come down the road. She was settin there straight, and lookin down the road, not this way nor that, till I riz up by the cedars when she had done got nigh, and said good mornin. And she said good mornin, in that way she talked, not lak ouren. I kept on walkin alongside the wagin, not sayin nuthin for a spell, nor she. Then she not sayin nuthin, I said, I am goin a way down toward Cashville, I wonder can I ride with you. She said I could, and I laid hand to the side board, and lept up.

How far you aimin to get today? I ast her.

They say I kin git to what they call Tomtown, she said.

Hit is a way past Cashville.

Not too far, they say.

Hit is a heap too far, I said, for today.

Then I will rest where I can, she said. Lak we done, afore. I got a little somethin left yit, and I kin pay. She did not say nuthin for a minute, then she said right sharp, I tried to pay Mrs. Marmaduke, and not be beholdin for bread.

Hit is too far, I said, for tonight.

I'll git there tomorrow.

Hit is too far, I said, for tomorrow.

I'll git there when I git there, she said sober, lookin down the road.

No, mam, I said, you won't.

How far is hit?

Hit is too far, I said, for mortal time.

And she looked at me right sudden, and her eyes was big and blue like her pappy's.

And mortal time, hit is, we live in, I said.

Then I told her how I had done gone to Cashville yestiddy, and she could git work to do there, and not leave so far from where folks knowed her name and had put forth their hand to her in sorrow, and where her pappy was laid in the ground. One of them boardin houses up nigh the Massey Mountain Company sawmills could use a woman could cook and was willin.

She did not say nuthin for a time. She looked down at her hands layin togither in her lap. Them wagin wheels squeaked lak they do, and the dust puffed up where the mule put his hoofs down. The road, hit was deep dust up over the rim, hit a drouth from way back. Hit did not look lak she was goin to say nuthin, settin there, her head bowed down. Then she said, I will do what I can, Meester Ween-ham. Which was what she called me, her comin from way up in Canady, where they do not talk so good.

III

They hired her up at the boardin house on Massey Mountain to be cookin and helpin to give their vituls to the men what was workin. I takin her up thar, and I seen what hit would be lak, them two big cook stoves, big as a saw-mill boiler, and her havin to be firin up one of them stoves and cookin fer hit looked lak a army, them tables was so long whar the men set down. And dishes to wash and the floor to sweep and mop. And her not no big woman, no way. I seen how hit would be, and I said, naw, you ain't a stayin here, not and you no bigger than a rabbit.

You brought me here, Meester Ween-ham, she said in that-air way she talked.

Yeah, I said, and I kin take you away agin.

You brought me here, she said right quiet and looked at me with them big eyes, and I'm stayin, Meester Ween-ham.

Her mind was set, nor cant-hook ner crowbar could budge hit. She taken her valise and put hit in that-air little room they give her, you could see daylight through the roof hit was so shack-built, and she taken my hand. Goodbye, Meester Ween-ham, she said.

So I got in the wagin and went home, for she told me to take hit and keep hit for her.

I stopped down at the foot of Massey whar a man could git him a bottle of moonshine whiskey from Buck Barkus what made it and sold it and stirred up abomination and taken silver for it, for hit looks lak ain't nuthin pore man won't do for money, and

what he won't do for money he up and does for lust of his flesh and sinful pride, and hit for pride the angels fell out of heaven and God's sight. So Buck Barkus he taken my four bits and hit was his sin, and me, I taken that air bottle, and hit was my sin, for a man takes a pull on the bottle and it is lak he taken a fire in his bowels and lust hit's name and his fingers itch. I done drunk up that air bottle and bust hit on a lime rock, and I come toward the house standin up in the wagin bed whuppin that pore old mule and the wagin jouncin and me standin up and whoopin and yellin in my lust and sinful pride.

My brother Jacob was standin thar and lookin at me when I come.

Ain't that that Canady-girl's mule? he done ast me, and I said hit was, and she said for me to keep hit.

You nigh kilt it, he said.

Hell, I said, I ain't kilt nuthin but me a bottle of Barkus panther-piss.

You nigh kilt this here mule, he said, and I looked at him how his face was, and I spat over the wagin wheel on the ground.

Jesus Christ, I said, I ain't kilt no mule.

Git down, Ashby, he said, quiet, and I'll unhitch.

Jesus Christ, I said, for hit was not nuthin them days for me to take the name of our sweet Jesus and hit in vain. You ain't unhitchin nuthin. I'm unhitchin. Hit's my wagin and hit's my mule and hit's my woman, I said.

Ashby, he said, quiet again, you git lak this and you ain't fit to unhitch no mule. You ain't fit for nuthin.

I looked down and I seen him standin there nigh the mule's head. I just looked down at him a half minute. Then I spat a spew over the wagin wheel, gittin ready slow to let fly lak a man will settin on his porch takin his ease nigh sun. Then all of a sudden I let out a whoop and I whupped that air old mule with that rope and fit to draw blood, and that old mule jumped lak hit was a race horse, and Jacob jumped back just in time, and I whooped and whupped.

We come round the corner of the house, me whoopin and whup-

pin and headed for the lot gate, what was open. I never seen how hit happened. But hit looked lak a wheel got hung on the gate post, what was locust and deep-set, and I seen that air old mule go down and me flyin. Hit seemed lak I flew slow, lak when a man dreams he can fly. Hit seemed lak I whooped once and me in the air. Hit seemed lak I was in the air flyin nigh a half hour. That was all I knewed.

I must have hit my head on a rock or somethin. Or maybe the ground what was tromped hard, hit being drout and the ground dry-hard. I didn't know nuthin till next mornin. I woke up, and I was layin in bed and a knot on my head the size of a simlin.

Then Jacob come in. How you feelin, Ashby? he ast, and I said I was feelin all right. I said there wasn't nuthin could faze me.

He didn't say nuthin. He just give me a cup of coffee. When I done drunk hit, he taken the cup and set hit on the table. Ashby, he said, that mule is dead.

I got out of the bed, not payin him no mind.

Ashby, he said, agin, that Canady-girl's mule is dead.

Well, I said, drag hit off. Drag hit off and give hit to the buzzards. That old mule, hit was not nuthin no-way but buzzard-bait.

Hit was the Canady-girl's mule, Jacob said.

Shore, I said, and I'll pay for hit, buzzard bait or no.

We can't pay for no mule, he said. Not right off. We got to grabble to pay.

You can't pay, I told him, but me, I can pay.

You can pay? he ast me.

By God, I said, I can and will. I ain't stayin here to grabble. They ain't nuthin here. I'm sick of it here and primed to puke. I'm goin to Massey.

He shook his head, slow, and said, They ain't nuthin at Massey.

They's money at Massey, I said. I was puttin on my pants and bucklin my belt. They's payin hard money at Massey.

Yeah, he said, and chargin you for board and bed, if you ain't got a house over there you can stay in. And hit's too far a piece to stay here and work at Massey. And ain't many's got a house over there now, the Company done throwed folks off the Mountain.

I'm goin, I said.

Leavin me? he ast. Leavin me and this here place?

I'm goin, I said.

Hit was your Pappy and Mammy's place, he said.

And I ain't Pappy and Mammy, I said. I'm Ashby Wyndham, and I ain't stayin here to rot and grabble.

Hit was lak that, and I made me a bundle of my stuff, and I walked out the door.

IV

Marie said that old mule was not no matter. She said hit was not no use to her. She said hit was God's will and she taken hit for a sign. Hit was a sign for her not to be movin down the big road, and her amongst strangers.

That was what she said when I kept sayin I was goin to pay.

I tried to pay. I tried and strove. They was money at Massey, but hit looked lak what they give you with one hand on Saturday night they taken back with the other hand afore Monday morning. But I kept on tryin, if air man did. I taken what I could ever week and helt hit out. Hit was not much, and me there two months. Hit was nineteen dollars, or nigh hit. I could helt out a little more if I had not bought Marie them pretties. I bought them pretties down at Cashtown where they got stores full of them things, and they is vanity and no denyin. But a man, and a young man he full of vanity and flesh-forwardness, and hit ain't nuthin but his lust and flesh-hotness if you scan clost and name hit. He sees a woman and he gits her on his mind and he wants to put pretties on her so he can see her with them things, but hit ain't nuthin but Bible lust comin out of his eyes.

I bought Marie them things. I bought her a necklace and hit was all gold or nigh, like the man said. Hit had a sparklet in it

and hit had a shine lak a diamint, you let the sun git it clear. Hit looked to me lak I had to git hit for Marie. I seen hit layin there, and I knowed I had to git it. So I ast him how much and he named hit and I taken four dollars and give it to him. I didn't say yea nor nay. I did not hem nor haw. I just give him that money, for I knowed Marie had to have hit. Marie was one of them little women, and not too much meat on them. She was a spry lak them little women, and quick when she aimed to. But she was a quiet one. She was quiet and still. She would be settin or standin there, and you never knowed hit. You look at her and you did not think nobody could be that quiet, and hit nat-chel. You looked and you never knowed hit was breath comin and goin in her bosom, hit moved so gentle for a marvel. She was lak water layin in the sun, and hit deep and nary a ruffle. But a little wind what a man can not feel blowin on his cheek, and a sparkle runs all over that water all of a sudden. She moved her hand just easy or hit was her eyes got bright of a sudden, and hit was lak that wind blowed on the water and hit was all sparkle. I bought that necklace to wear on her bosom for that sparkle what was in her.

She would be done work and I would be waitin. Axe or layin to a cross-cut all day, and I would see her comin out of that there kitchen and me waitin in the dark and the weariness was not nuthin. Hit was lak I was wakin up fresh and a sunbeam done smote you on the eyeball and roused you. We would go to them frolics at Massey on Saturday night. She would stand quiet and watch them folks dance and stomp and the caller called the figgers and them fiddles goin. She stood right quiet, but you could see the sparkle in her. If you looked clost. Then maybe we would dance a set or twain. But I did not git no more of Barkus moonshine, nor offen nobody else. At least not when I was with Marie. She did not lak for me to. And when I was with Marie I never felt no call.

I never taken likker lak I use to, and likker is a sin. But a man can not be good out of plain humankindness. He can not be good for it ain't in a pore man. He can not be good unlesst it is

good in the light of God's eye. God's eye ain't on him and he just swaps one sin for another one, and hit worse maybe. I laid off likker, but I swapped for another sin. I laid off likker for Marie but hit was because of pore human love and not for God's love. Then hit was for pore human love I taken that there worse sin, and I shame to say hit.

Week nights when there wasn't no frolic at Massey, we walked on the mountain. Hit was moonlight on them clearins, or stars, and on them roads where the wagins went in the daytime, and dark under the bushes and them trees. You look off west at night offen Massey, and you know they is the big valley and the hills off there, but you ain't seen it. Hit is lak the world is way down there and the black dark to yore sight, and the folks down there and the folks doins ain't nuthin. The sky is way up, and the stars. I was up on the mountain and hit was Marie with me. Hit was right brisk to cold on the mountain with the fall comin on, but we never taken no mind. We set down on a log or on a lime rock chunk, and hit was lak we'done built a warm fire for a camp and put our hands to the brightness. We never taken thought on the cold. A man don't take no thought on what he was or is or what will come.

I taken no thought and hit was my sin. I ain't never said hit was Marie's sin. When a man ever does a sin he ain't done hit secret and him private. He has done taken his own sin on his shoulders, but another man's sin too to bear him down. You throw a rock in a pond and hit don't make but one splash but they is ripples runs out from hit. I sinned and I taken Marie's sin on my shoulders for Judgmint. Hit was my fault she taken spot and had blemish laid on to her. Hit was for pore human man's love, but love ain't nuthin if hit ain't in God's eye.

Hit was after Christmas she told me she was heavy. She did not say nuthin or complain. She just named hit and looked at me quiet. I just bust out laughin. Lord God, I said, hit ain't nuthin, yore Mammy and mine come to hit. Lord God, I said, hit ain't a thing in the world. I bet he will be a buster, I said. I bet he will be a ring-tail. We will just go down to Cashtown

and git married. I got me half of Pappy's place and me and Jacob we will sell hit and me take my half.

She said would Jacob mind to. She said maybe Jacob wanted to stay on where his Pappy and Mammy was afore him.

Hell, I said, half is mine and I by God aim to have hit.

I said we would take my half and git us a place to stay in on Massey so I could git to my work. I said she would not be standin over them cook stoves to git vittles for other folks. I said she could stay home and git my vittles and the young uns for a change. I said I aimed to git my half.

I knowed Jacob would squeal lak a suckin pig caught under the bottom rail, but I never cared. I aimed to git my half. I come down the road on a Sunday evenin, and I seen Jacob settin under a cedar tree with his chair cocked back for hit was onseasnable warm and January. I seen him settin there but I knowed he never taken his ease. I knowed hit was the Bible layin on his lap.

I ast him how he was makin out. He said he did not have no complaint, and he made to git me a chair from the house. Naw, I said, I did not have no time for settin. I said how hit was business I come for. I said I was gittin married.

That Canady girl, he ast me.

I said hit was.

He said she was a good girl, and he knowed hit the way she was to that pore old man the Frencher.

I said, yeah, she was a good girl but I never put my foot in the big road and come twelve miles to git him to tell me. I said I come on business, lak I done said.

He said, what was hit.

The place, I said.

Hit is yores to come to, yores and that Canady girl's, he said.

And mine to sell and git my half, I said. That was what I said, right out. Good or bad, winter or summer, cold or hot, I never was one to let no word git spit-soft on my tongue. I never beat around no bush.

He just stood there shakin his head and never said nuthin.

I come to git my half, I said.

Ashby, he said, and shaken his head, hit ain't in me. Not to sell this here place and be leavin. Ashby, you ain't meanin hit. Not and yore Pappy and Mammy dyin here, and the bed they was in.

They is dead, I said, and ain't no talk makin hit different. They is dead and ain't this place or no other nuthin to them now.

I ain't sellin this place, he said, quiet.

This place, this place, I said. Lord God, you talk lak this here place was gold and diamints. This place is lak air other place. A place is dirt. And I spat on the bare ground where hit was tromped hard in front with the comin and goin.

Hit is dirt, Jacob said. But man, he is dirt, he said. He ain't nuthin but dirt, he said, but the God All Mighty breathed his breath in him and he ain't common dirt no more.

I told him this place was common dirt to me, by God.

Hit is not common to me, Jacob said.

I told him I was not breakin no wind if hit was common or not common dirt to him, but I was havin my half.

Ashby, Ashby, he said, ain't I yore brother.

I nigh wish to God you was not, I said.

Ashby, he commenst, and put out his hand lak to lay holt on me, but I never knowed what he aimed to say. I have laid awake in the dark and seen how hit was, and ain't never knowed.

By God, I said, and I looked in his face, and I knowed he would not sell never for no man's price. But that was not hit. Hit was some other thing come on me lookin at him.

By God, I said, and I give hit to him. I give hit to him on the side of the head.

I stunned him flat.

He laid on his back I ain't sayin how long, not lookin at me, just up at the sky and blinked lak a baby you put him in the light. Then he rolled on one side and got up, and stood there and looked at me.

You sellin, I yelled at him, but hit did not matter what I yelled for I knowed he was not sellin and I never waited for him to say.

Hit was on me, and I was blood-guilty in my heart. I give hit to him again.

I give hit to him in the mouth, and he lay there and I seen the blood come out of his mouth.

By God, I yelled, by God. I looked where he laid. Then I turned my back and left him layin and started down the big road.

I walked down the road fast. I reckin I done gone a mile and I looked down and seen my hand was bloody. I done cut my knucks and they was bloody. I reckin I cut them on his teeth.

I wish I had kilt him, I said out loud, but they was not nobody there. By God, I said, I wish I had kilt the bastard.

I walked down the road and sucked the blood out of my knucks where they was cut, and spat the blood and spit out in the middle of the road where folks goes.

V

The woods boss for the Company he give me the letter that lawyer writ me from Cashtown. He said he had some money to give me what was left fer me and fer me to come to see him. I bust out laughin. I knowed no lawyer was not givin me nor nobody no money. I tore up that air letter. Then the next week the boss said for me to go to Cashtown to see that lawyer what had writ me the letter. So come Saturday I went to Cashtown. I seen that lawyer. He laid the money on the table. Hit was thirteen twenty dollar bills and them new and green lak sallet, and one ten dollar bill and three one dollar bills and handful of chicken feed nickels and dimes and pennies and such, nigh a dollar. He counted hit out, ever bit. Hit was two hundred and seventy-three dollars and eighty-five cents, that air chicken feed. Hit is yoren, he said to me, and you sign yore name here.

How come, I ast him.

To sell yore place, he said, and I ast him about Jacob, and he said Jacob done hit.

Well I am God durned, I said. And I said, Mister, gimme that pen staff.

I signed my name. I put my John Henry where he said and I taken care and pains fer I never wanted no mistake. Hit was not plain writin, hit was fair a pitcher of my name Ashby Porsum Wyndham for full. I always was a hand to write good give me time and a pen not no old stub.

I ast him who bought the place and he said it was the Massey Mountain Company. They goin out yore way, he said, out Fiddler's Fortune Creek section. Yore timber was not nuthin to speak on but they kin use the house for cook house and all. They give a fair price, he said.

I ast him how much.

Three thirty, he said.

Hell, I said, Jacob never taken much. He will be wantin to git more offen me.

He never taken any, the lawyer feller said, he told me to give hit all to you.

Hell, I said, you ain't give hit all to me, you ain't give me nigh sixty dollars.

Hit was for fees and titles and such, he said, lak them lawyers talk.

Who gits hit, I ast him plain.

He said he did, him and the court house.

How come, I ast him.

He said the Company had to be shore me and Jacob owned hit true and right.

Lord God, I said, my pappy owned hit. My grandpappy owned hit, and nobody said him nay. And I heard say my great-grandpappy afore him.

Hearsay, he said, hearsay ain't the law.

I knowed hit was not no use to argify for he done had the money.

Mister Wyndham, he said to me, you done thought how you investin yore money. I advise you to buy some stock lak they call hit in the Company. You buy a piece of the Company. Then

you will be workin for yoreself. You will git yore pay and you will git some more too. If you put yore money in the Company.

The Company ain't nuthin to me, I said.

The Company will make money for you, he said.

Lord God, I said, that fool Jacob give you my money and you taken sixty dollars and I shore God ain't givin the Company none of my money.

You better put hit in the bank, he said, and not tote hit.

You taken sixty dollars, I said, and the bank, I bet they take a hundred if I give them the chanst.

He said they would keep hit safe for me.

Keep hit safe, I said, and looked at him square. Mister, I said, I am six foot and two inches and I weigh a hundred and ninety pounds and I can handle me a ax ten hours and never be blowed. Ain't no man I ever seen can take what is true mine offen me.

I taken that air money up. I put hit in my pants.

And let air man try, I said. I said that and I went out the door. I left him standin there blowin his breath on his eye glasses and wipin them with his handkchief.

I come back to Massey and I told Marie how hit was. You can quit cookin and scourin, I told her. You can cook my vittles, I said. We was married already, but she was still cookin for the Company.

Ashby, Ashby, she said soft, and hit looked lak she was gittin ready to cry.

Hell, I said, ain't you glad.

She said yes. She said she was glad not to be doin that cookin and scourin. But hit looked lak she was gittin ready to cry.

Hell, I said, what you look that way for.

Jacob, she said, hit was for Jacob.

Hit made me mad for fair. I told her. I said, I do not want to hear you namin his name. Not no more. What is betwixt me and him is betwixt me and him, and not nobody else. Not nobody. That was what I said. Hit looks lak a man can not bear and endure to look in the lookin glass when somebody has helt hit

up to him. He can not endure to see his pore sinful face. She named Jacob's name and hit was lak she helt up a lookin glass for me to see my sinful face.

Then somebody ast me where Jacob had done gone.

No where as I knowed, I said.

But they said, yeah, he had done gone.

Hit stuck in my mind. I never wanted hit to, but hit stuck. I was workin or was eatin or I was layin in bed and Marie there sleepin alongside of me, and hit would come in my head. How had he done gone. Hit was lak when you git a little bitsy fish bone stuck in yore throat, little nigh to nuthin, and you think hit is done gone for you ain't feelin nuthin and all of a sudden you swaller or you turn yore neck, and hit is not gone. Hit is there. Hit is lak you swallered a pin.

Saturday evenin I taken out for Fiddlers Fortune Creek. I come there nigh four o'clock. I seen the house. The door was open and I walked in. They was not nobody there. They was not nuthin there. Everthing was gone. The chairs and cook stove and the bedstid. I seen a chunk layin in the fireplace not all burnt up on one end and the ashes layin there, white ashes lak when good hard wood is done burnt. I squatted down and tetchet that chunk, lak a man will to see if may be the fire ain't long been out. But I knowed hit had been a long time. But I squatted and tetchet hit lak I never knowed.

I stood up and looked round. I seen the place where everything had been set. Where the chist had been set and the bedstid. Hit looked lak I could nigh see them settin there. I stood there hit ain't no sayin how long. A man stands in a house and there ain't nobody there but him and he listens and hearkens and hit is plum quiet but he listens lak he is tryin to hear somethin. Hit is lak somebody was tryin to tell him somethin. Hit was plum quiet.

I went up to Old Man Marmadukes place. I seen Mrs. Marmaduke and I ast her. She said Jacob was done gone. She said he come and taken his leave. He give her Mammys bedstid, she

said. He told her he did not want strangers to lay in hit and tetch head to piller. She showed me the bedstid.

I ast her where Jacob had done gone.

He never said, she said. He said he was goin to walk in the world. Hit was all he said, and she seen him walkin down the big road.

VI

I taken Marie out of that kitchen where she was cookin and fixin for strangers and put her in my house. I give a man a hundred and fifty dollars for that air house and give him two dollars ever month till hit was goin to come two hundred and twenty dollars. I could give hit all cash money but I helt out for Marie. She was not gittin on so good and I helt that money for medicine and such if need come. She said she was goin to be all right when the young un come. She said she was not nuthin but a little puny.

The young un come. He was a buster. He was nigh as big as his Mammy. He come some afore his time and all of a sudden but he was a buster. He never said by yore leave. She was washin dishes we et offen for supper and she yelled, Ashby, Ashby, all of a sudden. Hit was comin. There was not nobody there but me for we never knowed hit was time. Ain't nobody ever knowin hit is time for nuthin. Man figgers and calkilates but he ain't knowin. He looks at the sun and he knows what time of day hit is but there ain't no sayin the time of what is comin. The Bible says there is a time for everything, but pore man never knows the time. Hit ain't got no foot he can hear treadin. Hit comes lak an Injun. Hit lays lak a copperhead amongst the dead leaves. Hit lays on the bare ground, but a man never takes no notice for hit has got the color the ground has got.

I done what I could. What I seen them women do for Old Man Marmadukes wife one time when she come to bed. Marie laid there, and hit looked lak she was gittin ready to die. She yelled, and there was not nuthin I could do but name her name. Then I could not do that no more. Hit looked lak hit was not Marie layin there. Maybe hit was not me standin there, hit looked lak.

Lak that time my Mammy was dyin and named my salvation and I stood there and my heart was lak flint rock in my bosom. Hit was hard and hit cut me, but I never even lifted up my hand. A hardness comes on a man. He is done froze up, and there ain't thaw nor freshit. Pore human love, hit is lak that unless hit is in Gods eye. In Gods eye and in his blessed name.

I seen Marie layin there and moanin and yellin when the pain taken holt. I said, she is goin to die. I said that but hit looked lak I taken no count of hit. Hit was lak hit was not nuthin to me. I seen her lay and twist. I heard her yell. And hit come on me to just turn my back and walk out the door and leave her lay. I seen myself walk off down the mountain where hit was dark and no stars to speak of, and hit was quiet and no yellin. I never done hit, but hit come on me. Hit don't matter I never done hit. Hit come on me, and I say hit is my shame.

The young un come and she did not die. She laid there quiet. I taken hit and washed hit and done lak them women done at Old Man Marmadukes. I laid hit down on the bed alongside of Marie, and I covered hit and her up good. Then I chunked up the fire, what was gittin low to ash, and put on some more wood. Then I set down in a chair. I set there till day.

VII

We named him Frank for the old Frencher her father who had a name like Frank in French talk. He had blue eyes lak the old Frencher had. He was a buster and he thrived good. But Marie was puny. Hit looks lak you can't tell about women. A man gits him one of them big stout-looking women whats got good teeth and is full of laughin and bouncin, but she has her a young un and it ain't no time till she is draggin and ain't no good for nuthin. And I seen lots of them little spry women quick lak Marie when she had a mind what has a half a dozen kids and hit ain't nuthin to them. My Mammy was little and spry and nuthin never fazed her. Marie, hit got so she was not no account for nuthin. She taken yerbs and such what the women give her and

boughten medicine. And hit got so bad I got a doctor from Cashion town. But he could do nuthin but retch out his hand and say gimme when payin time come.

She done her work, but hit was trial and strain. She done her best, but many a time I come in from work and she was settin there white in the face and hit was me put the skillet on the stove. She always was a hand to set still and quiet, but now she was still and there was not no sparkle come. There was not no sparkle in her no more. Except maybe and hit rare when she taken up little Frank and helt him.

I spent money for her, but hit did not do no good. She seen me when I taken money out of that tin can where I kept hit, and she said for me not to. She said she didn't want Jacob's money spent on her. Hell, I said, hit is my money. She said to keep hit that a time might be comin when we would need hit worse. Hell, I said, we couldn't need hit no worse.

But the time come. The Company boss said they wasn't goin to pay us like afore. They was goin to cut our pay ten cents for ever hour. Hit come to a lot ever week. They said the Company wasn't makin nuthin and they couldn't pay hit lak afore.

A man was there workin in the sawmill by the name of Sweetwater. Nobody knowed where he come from but he come there short after me. He was a chunky built man and stout and he was a good hand at the mill everybody said. He never got in no trouble or nuthin. He was good-dispositioned and laughed. But he said the Company had plenty of money. He said he knowed hit had plenty. He said he knowed who got the money and hit was them rich fellers what taken the money from the Company. He said they was rich fellers what taken the money what by rights ought to come to them as had bought a piece of the Company and to us what worked for the Company. He said he knowed. He said if everybody quit workin for the Company all of a sudden and didn't nobody work for them, then they would have to pay us good. They would have to pay us more than afore. He said hit was ourn, and that was the way folks done to git paid better. He got folks to listen to him, and them as listened

to him talked to other folks. Three weeks and everybody quit. Hit was a strike, what they called hit.

They was fellers from the city come to talk. They made speeches and talked and said how the Company couldn't pay no more and how folks ought to know hit and git back to work. Unless they wanted to starve and not git nuthin. But they wasn't but a few and them not many what wanted to git back to work. Then they brung in strangers to the Mountain to work. They was all sorts of folks. They wasn't no tellin where they come from. They was going to do our work, and them strangers, and us git nuthin. That was what Sweetwater said. He said was we goin to let them sons of bitches do hit and us git nuthin. He said wan't true man would do hit. He said he wouldn't. He taken his stand and ast them as would be true men to git by his side. He talked good. They come to him. I wasn't the fust, but I never tarried. I was amongst them as stood by his side.

He said not let them fellers work. He said not let them git in the sawmill nor touch a axe or crosscut in the tool sheds nor lay hand to harness to hitch air mule nor put yoke on ox. He said to git somethin be it axe handle or canthook or lug hook or roll hook, and stand up there and keep them fellers off. But he said not to use no gun or cuttin knife. He said not to use no cant hook nor nuthin but yore bare knucks if them fellers did not use nuthin else. He said just have them things layin there.

We kept them fellers off. They tried three times. Two times hit was bare knucks and then they come with one thing and another they had laid holt to. Sweetwater picked him up a canthook and yelled, come on boys hit is goin to be a play party. Hit was not no play party for some of them fellers. Hit was busted heads and busted arms and legs. They was layin on the ground and they drugged them off. Them fellers didn't stay on the Mountain. Then the Company brung more fellers and constables and deputies with guns. Them constables come up with guns, and told us to git off, and Sweetwater looked at them and said, hell, they ain't goin to shoot nobody, they shoot somebody and they ain't got enuf bullets to go round if the boys git mad. He told them

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM 209

to shoot him if they wanted to start. They never shot him. Them other fellers stayed there on the Mountain but they never bothered us for two days more. Then they said they was another big strike nigh Cashtown, and another one in the coal.

Then Private Porsum come on the Mountain. He made another speech at Tomtown, and told how the Company could not pay no more and how we was breakin the law. Folks from Cashtown and Tomtown come and told us. They said the folks hearkened good to the Private. Sweetwater said the Private was with the rich fellers and was lyin, and a feller said Private Porsum never lied, he was not no man to lie. That feller said he believed the Private because he come off the Mountain.

He has done come a long way off the Mountain, Sweetwater said.

He ain't forgot, the feller said.

Maybe he ain't forgot, Sweetwater said, but he ain't forgot neither how hit feels to have money in the bank and he ain't forgot where he gits his money. He gits it from them rich fellers for talkin lak they tells him. And he gits hit off yore back and gits hit off yore table.

Hit is a lie, the feller said.

Then everybody looked for Sweetwater to do somethin, to hit him or somethin for callin him a liar. We seen how he told that constable to shoot him and give him the dare, and then Sweetwater didn't do nuthin but let that feller call him a liar.

I ain't sayin how Sweetwater didn't do right. Maybe he done Bible right. I swear and believe he done right. But then it made me plum disgusted. I was not no Bible man in them days. I was in the dark and the wicked world. I was sunk down in the world's ways. I was plum disgusted for Sweetwater.

Then Sweetwater ast him, you got kids ain't you?

The feller said, yes.

They got shoes on the feet, Sweetwater ast him.

Naw, the feller said.

They got plenty cover on the bed, he ast him.

Shet up, the feller said.

They got meat and bread on the table, Sweetwater ast him.
The feller never said nuthin, he just looked at Sweetwater.
They don't stand round, Sweetwater ast him, and say Pappy
gimme somethin to eat.

The feller never said nuthin but I seen him squinch up round
the eyes lak he was sightin down a gun barrel, and aimin at
Sweetwater.

They don't wake up in the night, Sweetwater ast him, and say
Pappy I'm hongry.

Then that feller just yelled God damn yore soul. And he
jumped at Sweetwater swinging his arms

But he never hit him. They grabbed him fust.

Folks was standin there and seen hit. But they seen too how
Sweetwater taken a lie offen him.

Then Private Porsum come on the Mountain. He stood on a
wagin and made a speech. I knowed he was my cousin but I
never seen him afore. I knowed how he was in the war and what
he done to them Germins. I knowed how he never taken nuthin
for killin no human man, and how he would not be nuthin but a
Private soljer. I heard him talk. He was a big fine lookin man,
standin up there on that wagin, and he talked good.

A feller standin alongside of me, he said, Ashby ain't he yore
cousin.

I said he was my cousin. He was my second blood cousin.

The Private said the Company was doin good as hit could. He
said they couldn't pay no more. He said if they paid more there
wouldn't be no Company in no time, and everybody would be
ruint. He said to git back to work lak the folks done nigh Cash-
town and at Tomtown and down at the coal mine. He said he
come to say hit because he had not never forgot how the folks
on the Mountain was his own folks. He said he come to ease his
mind because he did not want to know of no trouble amongst his
own folks.

Then somebody yelled, Private how you git yore money.

I knowed hit was Sweetwater. He was standin nigh me and I
knowed his voice.

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM 211

The Lord has prospered me, Private Porsum said, and he said he give thanks.

The Lord and the Massey Mountain Lumber Company, Sweetwater yelled.

Folks stepped back from round Sweetwater. There was just me and him standin nigh.

The Lord and the Atlas Iron Company, Sweetwater yelled agin.

Then somebody yelled for him to shet up.

But he never stopped. He yelled, Private who sent you up here.

I come to ease my mind, the Private said, and do right.

Private Porsum, Sweetwater yelled, do you stand there and say before God and man nobody sent you up here.

I say hit, the Private said.

And I, Sweetwater yelled, and he stopped and everybody looked at him, say hit's a God damn lie. And he laughed.

I was standin nigh, and I seen him when he called the Private a lie. He had done taken the lie hisself offen a feller and everybody standin by and no shame hit looked lak. And now give the Private a lie. Hit made me disgusted and sick to puke when Sweetwater taken that lie hisself and just laughed, and now he give the Private a lie and a man as takes a lie and don't do nuthin but laugh, he ain't got no right, hit looked lak to me, to be puttin the lie on nobody. I didn't say hit so to myself all of a sudden, but hit come to me later that away. I just seen him put a lie on the Private and him my cousin, and lak I got disgusted afore I got mad. I got mad all of a sudden. I give hit to Sweetwater.

I give him a jolt on the side of the head. He come down on his knee, and I give hit to him agin. But he was tough. Afore I knowed hit he done butted me in the stomach and grabbed me. He wasn't no big man, but stout in the arms. He nigh throwed me and me beatin on him. But I snaked him with my leg and we come down. He got my arm twisted and nigh broke hit and me beatin on him. He would broke hit if I hadn't laid holt of a chunk of rock. I never knowed I grabbed hit. I give hit to him right in the face. He slipped his holt and I seen the blood on his

face and him layin there. I seen the chunk in my hand lak I never knowed I had helt hit. Then I seen him and hit looked lak I didn't care if I had hit him with a chunk.

I done a lot of fightin in my time of sin and revelin. But I always fit fair. If hit was bare knucks hit was bare knucks, if hit was stomp and gouge hit was stomp and gouge. I always let the other feller call the tune and hist the burden. I never used no chunk on nobody. But hit was a chunk I give Sweetwater, and hit looked lak I didn't care. Hit was on me so. He started to git up and I kicked him. Right in the side.

Then some fellow come at me. They was fightin all round of a sudden. Some fellers was aimin to help Sweetwater, but not no plenty, and fellers was fightin them. Sweetwater tried to git up but some feller was beatin on him.

They was not many fellers with Sweetwater. Them others beat them good. Constables taken Sweetwater and some of the others with him and put them in jail down at Cashtown. I never seen him agin. They said he was bad beat up.

I am sorry and grieve I used a chunk on Sweetwater. I ought never kicked him. I ought never lifted up my hand agin him in no way. If I had helt my hand, maybe nuthin would happened. Maybe they would not been no fightin. Maybe the Company would paid us good and decent. Maybe they would not come no bad times on the Mountain lak come, and not long. Hit has 'come to me Sweetwater was a good man.

But I ain't never said the Private was not no good man. A big man lak what never taken nuthin for doin what he done to them Germins, he ain't goin to take money offen pore folks, and them his own folks and with young uns. I ain't never said he did not aim to do good lak he said when he come on the Mountain. Hit ain't for me to judge. Not him or no man. Not and me what I been and what I am. Oh Lord, I was dirt and you taken me up from the dark ground and blowed yore breath in me, but I am sinful and weak.

VIII

Next day they was work. Folks started cuttin and haulin and workin in the mill again. Nigh everybody went to work agin, but them what was in jail down to Cashtown or too bad beat up. But they was some said they be God damn if they would work for the Company no more, and left. If they had anywheres to go. But not many, for a man has to git bread and meat. The pay wasn't good as afore, but the Company did say they wouldn't cut hit no ten cents ever hour. They cut hit eight cents, what helped some. But hit was tight, and I seen folks hongry.

I went to work agin. I worked five weeks lak afore. Then one Saturday the woods boss said to me, Wyndham, they ain't no use comin back Monday mornin, they ain't no work for you. And I ast him, why, ain't I done good. He said, good as the next un. I said, why, and he said, hit looks lak they's cuttin down, and they said to git shed of these fellers. He helt a piece of paper in his hand and hit had five names on hit. They was five of us got told not to come back.

I tried to git somethin to do. I went down to Cashtown and tried to git hit. But they wasn't nuthin. I tried the Atlas Iron Company and they wasn't nuthin. I went plum down to the coal mine, and they said they didn't have no use for me. Hit taken me a day to git down there and a day to git back and after night. I left Marie with Frank home and nobody there, but I had to git down and see. I went to Tomtown. Hit was the same. Hit was winter and I couldn't make no gardin patch nor nuthin. I couldn't help nobody farmin. I tried cuttin stovewood with a feller had a wagin and sellin hit in Tomtown and we got a few dollars. But then we cut some more and couldn't git shed of hit. I taken nigh all what money was left in the tin can where I kept hit hid to git somethin to eat for Marie and Frank. They et somethin, and Marie made no complaint. I paid on the house one month, then I didn't pay. I wasn't goin to take money for somethin to eat and pay on the house. I told the man I would make hit up. I

ast him to let me work hit out, but he said he didn't have no work.

I was comin down the road and I met a feller named Bud Jeffers. I knowed him workin for the Company. He ast me how I was makin out. I said I wasn't makin out. He said he wasn't makin out neither. Ain't you workin, I ast him. Naw, he said, they told him to git out. He said they told some more to git out. Eleven hit was. He ast me didn't I hear tell, and I said naw. Everybody, he said, what taken sides with Sweetwater at fust, ever one. Everybody what talked for Sweetwater about not workin, ever one.

They told me they was just cuttin down, I said.

Cuttin down on them as was with Sweetwater at fust, he said, and taken his side.

You taken his side. I taken his side. All them fellers taken his side.

Hit can't be so, I said, for hit was me knocked Sweetwater down. For callin the Private a lie. Hit was me knocked him down.

You was a durn fool to do hit, he said.

That was what he named me. A durn fool.

I seen a time I busted a man for callin me a durn fool. I come nigh bustin Bud Jeffers standin there in the road. Hit looked lak I was goin to. Then all of a sudden they wasn't no madmeanness in me. They wasn't nuthin in me, meanness or nuthin else. Hit was lak the bottom drops out of a bucket of a sudden and the water is spilt. I just stood there and they wasn't nuthin in me lak a old man done used up. I seen Bud Jeffers walk on down the road.

I looked up in the sky. Hit was gray, lak to snow. Not gray clouds seperit lak, but all gray and low hangin. I looked across the valley over them black trees what didn't have no leaves, and over them few houses I seen but they was little hit was so far, and lak they wasn't nobody in them. Lak folks had done gone and left them. I looked across the valley where the sky come down to the hills, but hit was mist-smoky hit was so far, and a

man couldn't say for sure where the hills left off and the sky begun. The sky was layin on the hills.

Hit was lak a man knowed how hit was to be by hisself. To be by hisself and not nuthin. Hit was lak I was myself in the world, and not nobody else. Not Marie. And not Frank. Lak there hadn't never been no Marie and no Frank and no Pappy and Mammy and no Jacob. Not nobody but me, and me nuthin.

Hit was lak the time Frank died. Hit was lak I was standin there in the road by myself and the time was comin and everywhere was so quiet I could nigh hear hit steppin stealthy. Lak a man out at night hears somethin and stops of a sudden and hearkens. Then he says, naw, hit ain't nuthin but the wind maybe. And he goes on.

A man listens quiet and he can hear the Lord's foot mashin down the hills. Lak they wasn't nuthin but old ruts in the road with the mud done dried where the wagin wheel squesched hit up soft. He hears hit but he don't know to name hit.

Frank died in February. Hit was in his throat and hit looked lak he couldn't git no breath. He died all of a sudden, lak he come of a sudden and his Mammy not ready. It was lak he come of a sudden and was in a hurry for he knowed he didn't have no time much to stay.

They put him in the ground, and we seen hit.

We come home and we was in the house, but we never knowed one another. Marie laid on the bed and shet her eyes, and I wasn't nuthin to her. I kept tryin to git her to listen to me, but she wouldn't unshet her eyes for nuthin. Hit come dark, and I set there. Now and agin I put some wood on the fire. Marie laid there, but I wasn't nuthin to her. I looked at her, and I knowed she wasn't nuthin to me. She was lak a old coat somebody done flung down, and I didn't know who. I couldn't look at her of a sudden and know she wasn't nuthin to me. I knowed why she wouldn't unshet her eyes. She couldn't bear and endure to see my face. I knowed hit. Ain't nobody nuthin of his own strength when the rub comes, and a man knows hit of a sudden and hit is lak he was crossin a river on the ice at night and the

ice breaks. Hit is lak he goes down of a sudden. The cold water is on him, and the blackness, and ain't nobody to hear him yell.

I knowed Marie wasn't nuthin to me, and hit was lak I went through the ice. I couldn't bear and endure to see her layin there and know hit.

I stood up and I went out the door. That night when Frank come into this here world of sin and pain, I stood and seen his Mammy layin there and heard her yell, and it come on me to walk out of that air house, and hit night time, and walk and keep on walkin where hit was dark and there wasn't no yellin or nuthin. Hit come on me but I never done hit. But this time when I seen her layin there with her eyes shet and I knowed of a sudden she wasn't nuthin to me and my heart was like a orange swooze dry and thowed down, I up and went out the door. I never made up my mind to git out. I didn't even know I had done left. One minute I was standin lookin at her lay and the next I was out in dark and I was runnin up the road with my feet hittin on the froze-hard ground and my head throwed back lookin up in the sky where the stars was showin, lak they do in winter time. I never knowed how I got there.

I run on the Mountain. I wasn't carin where. Just so I was runnin. I wasn't on no road. I was going acrost rock and dead bresh. I run into hit and hit snatched and tore me. I kept on runnin. I never felt hit. I fell down on them rocks, and I got up and run agin.

I fell down and I didn't git up. I laid and I didn't know nuthin. Then I knowed the breathin was lak fire in my chist when I drawed hit, but hit didn't matter none to me for hit was lak hit was somebody else's chist. I laid and hit was quiet and I seen how them stars was in the sky and steady.

I was hearin my name. Maybe I was hearin hit for a long spell layin there and didn't know, lak when you ain't waked up and somebody keeps callin yore name. You hears yore name named and knows hit, but you ain't hearin either. Then hit was clear. Hit said, Ashby, Ashby, Ashby Wyndham.

Hit was Frank callin me. He was callin his Pappy. He hadn't

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM 217

never said mortal word in this world. He never got big enuff to say no word true and proper. But I knowed hit was him. I knowed hit lak he was a growed boy and I had knowed his voice.

Frank, I said, Frank.

And he said, yes sir, Pappy, lak he was a mannered boy.

Frank, I said, where are you.

I am right here, Pappy, he said.

Frank, I said, I can't see you for the dark.

Hit is dark to mortal eye, he said.

Oh, Frank, I said, and hit looked lak my heart would bust, why did you up and leave, why did you git up and go, didn't we treat you good.

Oh, Pappy, he said, Oh, Pappy, I grieve to tell.

Why did you have to up and go, I said.

Oh, Pappy, he said, I couldn't thrive none and hit the vittles of wickedness. I couldn't thrive and hit vittles and sop taken in blood wrath and wickedness. And from Jacob. Hit was from yore brother Jacob you taken hit. Them vittles come in my throat and my throat swelled for wickedness and I had to up and go.

Oh, Frank, I commenst, but wouldn't no words come.

I come lak the Lord sent me little and pure, he said, and the Lord he taken me so.

Oh, Frank, I said, and the big tears bust like a freshet.

Pappy, Pappy, he said.

Oh, Frank, I said, what can I do.

Don't cry, Pappy, he said.

What can I do, I said.

You can git up and find Jacob, he said, and take him by the hand.

I can't never find him, I said.

You can walk in the world, he said, till you find him. He is walkin in the world amongst strangers, and you can walk in the world. You can ast folks. You can tell folks how it was with you, and how you lifted up yore hand agin him and them others,

and how no man ought never to. You can ast have they seed him.
And the Lord will lead you and put yore hand in Jacob's hand.

Frank, I commenst.

Give my Mammy a kiss for me, he said.

Frank, Frank, I said, but he was done gone. He had said his say, and he was done gone.

I got up offen the cold ground. I went down the Mountain. Light was just showin blue and weak over Massey when I come to my house and entered in hit.

I seen Marie layin there. She was sleepin. I went to her and I lent over and I kissed her lak Frank said. She opened her eyes slow and looked at me. Hit was a kiss from little Frank, I said.

And I knelt down beside the bed and let my head lay and she put her hand on my head.

IX

We give what little truck and plunder we had to them as needed hit more than we did. We taken some clothes to keep clean and decent in a bundle, and a skillet to cook in, and nigh four dollars I had, and we walked down off the Mountain. We come to a settlemint, and then they was more settlemints and towns, and I ast folks had they met with Jacob, and told them how I come to be huntin him. I done forgot the names of haf them places. We stopped in them places and I done what I could git to do. We was hungry and hit no lie more than one night when the sun went down. We laid down and the belly was drawed, and the sun come and hit was the same. But the Lord taken mind on the sparrow, and the Lord taken mind on us. He give me work to do, and he put bread and meat in our mouth. Folks taken us in and they give us bite and sup and we give thanks. I never ast for nuthin. I done somethin ever time to pay.

I stood in the street and I told folks how hit was. How the Lord had laid hit on me to tell folks. I told them my wickedness and how the wicked man will come down low. I met folks in the big road and I told them. I told them how peace come in

my heart and hit was lak sunshine when the clouds are done gone. And I met folks as taken heed. You meet a man in the road as has got a coat on his back and his belly full and folks give him a good name and got a tight roof over his head and money in his pants. Hit looks lak he ain't thinkin on nuthin but gittin and thrivin and takin his ease, and you tells him how peace come in yore heart. But you name peace in yore heart and you look in his face and hit is drawed of a sudden. Hit is lak they was a old stitch or a old pain in him and he ain't thought nuthin on hit and all of a sudden he knows somethin is in him growin and he gits cold all over and knows he is goin to die and wrys up his face. Maybe he will make his heart hard and he will tell you to git out of his way. But you know they ain't no peace in his heart. And he knows hit and wrys up his face. But I met a man in the road nigh a settlemint by the name of Sumatry and I told him how hit was. You got peace in yore heart, he ast me.

I told him I did, and give praise. He looked at me nigh half a minute. The Lord bless you, he said of a sudden. Then he said, and the Lord have mercy on my soul.

He was a big man with a black beard all curly, and he had on a black coat and a gold watch and chain and he was ridin in a buggy. He said that to me and then he went off down the road in the buggy.

I come to towns and I stood in the street where the folks was and I read to them folks out of the Bible. I give them the Lords word lak hit come to me and I told them how hit was with me.

Hit was eight months when we come to Mitchell Landin. Hit is a settlemint on the river, and they was buildin a bridge there. I got me work on the bridge, and Murry got him work. Murry was a big boy, and he could do work lak a man. He taken up with us from a town up the valley. He did not have no folks. He was a orfin in the world, and he come with us. He could not read none but he would set and listen and hearken when I read what the Bible said. I read hit and he never moved.

They was a feller workin on the bridge by the name of Jasper Littlefoot. Me and him, we was workin alongside, swingin a pick

and shevil where the road was goin to the bridge. I ast him did he live in Mitchell Landin, and he said, naw he did not. I ast him where he come from, lak a man will and him civil. He did not say nuthin and I reckined he did not ketch me good. So I ast him agin. He histed up his shevil lak he was gittin ready to blast me over the head, and he said you son of a bitch. He said hit agin. I did not do nuthin. I looked at him and I said, you named me a son of a bitch, I am a pore sinful man in Gods sight but I ain't no son of a bitch. He did not say no more, and he put down his shevil.

They was a feller seen hit and hit was afterwards he said to me, that feller Littlefoot nigh killed you.

Why, I ast him.

He done kilt one man, he said.

Why was he fixin to kill me, I ast him.

Because you ast him where he come from, he said. And he laughed and he spat out on the ground and he said, he is right touchous if you ast him where he come from, he is touchous because he come from the pen.

He told me that feller was in the pen ten years for killin a man. He had not been out no time, and he was touchous. He did not have nuthin to do with folks. He lived in a old shanty boat on the river by hisself.

The next day when we quit workin about sun, I seen Littlefoot start walkin off. I walked aside of him. I said to him, I was in a dark prisn and I laid in the dark.

He did not say nuthin. He just kept walkin and lookin down the road lak they was not nobody but hisself.

I laid in the dark, I said, and I was a lost man and somebody put a key in the lock and throwed the door wide open and the light come in so strong I blinked blind for the brightness.

Yeah, he said, yeah, they put a key in my lock and they throwed the door open but hit taken them ten years.

He said hit but he never looked at me when he done hit.

I laid longer, I said.

How long, he said.

Not ten years, I said, hit was more than a score.

He looked at me right clost, and he seen I was not no old man, and he said, they must have put you in for bitin yore Mammy on the tit.

Naw, I said, naw, but I laid in the dark nigh all my life, I laid in the prisen cell but hit was the dark of sin and wickedness where I laid.

He looked at me agin. He stopped in the road and looked at me and scan me clost, and he did not say but one word. Hit was a word I ain't goin to put on no paper. Hit was a word of filthiness and abominations. But he give me a look and hit was all he said. Then he started walkin down the road.

But when the job out at the bridge was done finished he taken up with us. I had done told him how hit was with me. I had done read the Lords blessed word to him. We had done been down on our knee bones together afore God and him most High.

I done said he lived by hisself on a shanty boat. He taken us on the shanty boat with him. We was goin down the river and we was goin to tell the Gospel to them as had ears.

We come to towns and places on the river. We worked to git money to buy a little somethin to eat. We fished in the river. Jasper had him a old squirrel rifle and we kilt squirrels and rabbits and et them. We was a long time on the river, comin down. We stayed at places a long time and worked and told folks about Gods blessed word and how peace come in our hearts. Then when hit come on us to be goin we went down the river. A old man and his wife taken up with us at a town they named Cherryville. The house they had had done burnt plum down to the ground and the grandbabby they was raisin. That baby was all the folks they had. Our baby has done gone to the Lord, the old man said, and we done turned our eyes to the Lord. They had the name of Lumpkin. He was a old man, but he washed a lot and kept hisself clean. He had been a hand to chaw and smoke, he said, but when the Gospel taken holt he give hit up. Hit was a filthiness, he said.

We seen days hungry and we seen days cold on the river. But

we taken what the Lord sent and knowed hit was good. We give praise and rejoicin.

I always ast if folks had seen Jacob. At one place they was a man as thought he had seen him. But he was not positive of a certain.

Hit was nigh a year on the river and we come to Hulltown. Hit was a big town. Hit was the biggest town I ever seen afore we come to the city here where the Lord has done led us. At Hulltown they was a furnace where they melted the iron out of the rock they taken out of the ground. I got me a job workin at the furnace. And Jasper got him a job. Hit was the Lords blessin for we needed money bad. Old Sister Lumpkin was down and porely. Marie watched her and tended on her but we needed money to git her somethin to eat as would stay on her stummick and to git her medicine.

In Hulltown we taken Pearl from the house of abominations.

Hit was summer and I was comin down the street in a part of town where I had not never been. Hit was Sunday evenin at sun, and I was just walkin for hit had come on me so. Hit was not dark yet but them lights in the street come on just a minute after I seen the house. Them lights in town come on long afore a man had good need. I seen the house and I seen the two of them settin on the porch laughin and talkin. Hit was a yeller house set by a alley. The other houses nigh hit was not houses for folks to dwell in, and they was closed up for a Sunday. Hit had a fence around hit and a gate. I seen the woman and the man settin there, and I stopped at the gate. I give them a good evenin as best I knowed. The woman said good evenin but the man did not say nuthin.

She was a medium size woman and her hair was yeller. The man was a big man. They both had on fine clothes, I seen. They was settin in a swing and the man had his arm around the woman. The woman had on a yeller dress.

I ast could I come in. I had not aimed to but the Lord laid hit on my tongue lak he done them days. I seen somebody and the

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM 223

Lord laid hit on my tongue may be. If he did not I never said nuthin. But I ast them could I come in a minute.

They ain't nuthin stoppin you, the woman said. The man did not say nuthin. He just looked at me lak I was a mule he might buy but did not reckin he would.

I said thank you kindly, and I went in that air gate. I come on the porch.

The lady said the other girls would not be back till nigh eight o'clock. She ast did I want to see one of the girls.

I said, no mam.

Well you better git on and peddle yore apples, the man said to me. You ain't got no business here, he said.

I know I ain't, I said, but the Lord has.

For Christ sake, the man said, and he knocked the ashes off his cigar.

What do you want, the lady ast me.

Hell, the man said, he dont want nuthin he can pay for. Then he said to me, buddy, this is a high class place and you better git.

I was gittin ready to say excuse me please and git on, but the lady ast me what did I want.

Hell, says the man, he wants a dime to git him a cup of coffee. He retched in his pants and he taken a dime. He throwed the dime on the floor in front of me. I let hit lay.

I dont want no dime, I told him. I was gittin ready to go, I said, but yore wife ast me what I come for.

Wife, the man said, and he bust out laughin.

The lady did not laugh. He shaken her with his arm lak he was tryin to make her laugh. She said, I dont see nuthin so God dam funny.

He stopped laughin of a sudden and he said to me, you git on.

But the lady said to him, Claude you act too dam big, you act lak you own the place. She told him to shut up and take his God dam hands offen her.

He got mad. You could see he was gittin mad. You talk that way to me, he said, and you let that God dam trash come in here, and he ain't got a dime.

I am a pore man, I said, but I ain't trash. I am a pore man but I got Jesus in my heart.

This is a hell of a place to bring Jesus, the man said and he laughed agin. I seen his heart was hardened.

She did not pay no mind. She ast me what did I want.

I did not want nuthin, mam, I said, the Lord just laid hit on me to come in and ast did you have the peace of Jesus in yore heart.

Well you done ast it, the lady said, and now you can git out.

You can just take yore bleedin Jesus and git out, the man said to me, afore I knock the bleedin Jesus out of you.

Mister, I said to him, I am goin to go. I come not meanin no harm. The Lord laid hit on me to come and the Lord lays hit on me to go, and not no human man.

Git out, he said.

I am, I said, but I am goin in the Lord and not for you.

I ought never said hit. A man can be proud and high in the Lord lak he can in pore human pride and hit is a sin. Hit is a worse sin.

The hell you say, the man said.

I turned round and started down the steps. I never looked back. I did not see him git up from that air swing. I did not know nuthin till I felt him kick me where a man sets down. I was on them steps and hit knocked me plum down on the ground and me not expectin hit.

The man was standin there laughin. I got up and I seen the lady was laughin too. I was surprised the lady was laughin.

I went to the gate and the lady kept on laughin. Mam, I said, hit ain't fitten for you to laugh.

All right, the man said, and I will bust you agin.

He come down off the porch. I walked on slow. I knowed he was comin but I never looked back. I heard him comin on the walk behind me. I got to the end of the fence where the alley was and he hit me on the side of the head. He knocked me down.

I will learn you to talk that way to a lady, he said.

I was layin there. Hit was night now but he was standin under the light hangin in the street and I seen him good.

I got up and he give hit to me agin. I nigh give hit back to him, but I never. I knowed hit was not the Lords will for me to. I knowed hit all come on me because I taken sinful pride in the Lord, and hit is a sin. He give hit to me three times afore he knocked me down.

The lady come out the gate and was standin there.

I got up and he knocked me down agin. I was layin in the alley.

The lady was laughin. If he won't fight lak a man, she said, kick him lak he was a dog.

I will learn him to fight, the man said.

I come up and he give hit to me three times. He knocked me down.

Kick him, the lady said. Kick him lak he was a dog.

She was laughin and goin on but hit was not lak folks laughs of a common. Hit was lak she did not know she was laughin and she could not stop hit.

I got up agin when I could. I got up slow because he had shore messed me up. He was a big man. He was nigh as big as they come. He was gittin fat but he had his strength.

I got up and he give hit to me. But just then I seen a man come round the corner of the alley. I seen hit was a police man. But just then that man give hit to me on the jaw just that time the lady stopped laughin and looked at that police man. That police man said somethin but I never understood what hit was. I did not understand for hit was right then I done hit. I did not aim to and I did not rightly know I done hit till I seen that man layin there and his head on the brickwalk. Somethin must have went pop inside me for I never knowed what I done. That man must have turned round to see who that police man was. He must have got offen his balance. He must have not been careful or somethin to let a man what was fixed lak I was knock him down.

I seen him layin there and I seen the police man. I knowed he was goin to take me.

He said, Miss Pearl what is goin on here.

Miss Pearl was that ladys name.

She stopped laughin and she pointed at him was layin with his head on the brick walk and she said, hit is him.

She said somethin else but I never knowed what hit was. I did not know nuthin. I just sunk down on the ground.

I come to and I was layin on a bed. Hit was a good bed and sweet smellin. Then I seen that lady standin there. She ast how did I feel.

I tetched my face with my hand. Hit was swole up lak a punkin.

You done stopped bleedin, she said, but you ain't no pretty pitcher.

I ast was the police man goin to take me to jail.

Why that was Mr. Duffy, she said, why Mr. Duffy has done taken him.

Ain't they goin to take me, I said.

Naw, she said, Mr. Duffy is a friend of mine and he takes what ones I say take. I said for Mr. Duffy to take him and he taken him. They had to take him in a ambylance and I bet he ain't come round yit with his head bust lak hit was.

I ought never done hit, I said.

Hit was not yore fault, she said, I reckin hit was Jesus fault. Jesus just taken his eyes offen you a secont lak he had not ought to. He must have winked, maybe.

I said I had to git on home.

You ain't fitten to go no wheres, she said.

I said I had to git on home.

She ast me where did I stay at.

I told her on the shanty boat. And I got offen that bed.

Hit is a long way, she said, and you ain't in no shape.

I said I was goin.

She said she was goin to git me there. I am goin to see you git there, she said.

She done hit for all of me.

X

We was movin on the river. They was me and Marie and Old Man Lumpkin and Mrs. Lumpkin and Murry what was gittin to be nigh a man and Jasper and Pearl. They was sevin of us countin Pearl. She come to the shanty boat that night with me. Hit was the Lords will she come for I lak not to got there. Just afore we got there she nigh had to tote me. We got right to hit and I sunk down and did not know nuthin. I come to and I seen I was on the boat. I seen Marie standin there, and she ast me how did I feel. I said I felt better than I did last night.

Last night, she said, last night, this ain't tomorrer, this is the day after tomorrer and hit is gittin nigh to sun.

I had laid there the enduren time and not known.

And we is on the river, she said. We is a long way on the river from Hulltown.

How come, I ast her.

She pointed and I seen where she pointed and there was that lady standin. She said for us to git on, Marie said.

She had ast Marie to git on. She said she aimed to pray God and worship and rejoice if he would stretch out his hand and learn her. But she said she did not reckin she would learn good in Hulltown, and her weak and frail.

I seen her standin there and I lak not to knowed her. She was not wearin that yeller dress lak she had been. She was wearin a old dress belonged to Mrs. Lumpkin. Just a old common dress down to her feet and decent.

Marie said how that night she brung me she set there all night or helped her and Mrs. Lumpkin fix for me. When light come she ast them to git on. She taken Marie by the hand and ast her. And when they got started good she ast Mrs. Lumpkin who was nigh of a size did she have air old dress, and she taken off that yeller dress and put on Mrs. Lumpkins dress and she throwed that yeller dress in the river. She said she would not give hit to nobody. Said no decent woman would not want to wear a dress of hern.

I seen her standin there in that old dress and barefoot. She had throwed her pointed shoes in the river.

Her hair was still yellier but hit was not all curly lak afore. She looked lak she was oldern I knewed. She was oldern me and Marie.

She done her part. When we stopped at them towns she worked when she could git work to do. If she could not git no work she taken care of the boat and cooked the vittles for us. She had laid soft one time and now she laid hard. She had been in a bed was soft and sweet smellin and now hit was a pallet on the hard floor. But she did not never complain and she praised God how he taken her from the house of abominations. She prayed the Lord to take her by the hand and learn her to rejoice. She ast us to pray for her and named how she wallered in sin and grunted lak a hog after the worlds slop and taken no thought. She named hit and they was tears come in her eyes.

Marie said how of a night when the women was layin on the side of the curtain where they taken there rest and was sleepin she would wake up for Pearl grabbin holt of her hand. Pearl would grab holt of her hand in the dark.

Hit looked lak Marie was a sister to her.

When Marie come sick hit was Pearl set beside her and fanned them flies and give water for the burnin fever and taken no rest or ease.

Marie was sick eight days and she died.

Hit was sevin days and Marie said to me, Ashby I am goin to go.

She was nigh too weak to talk.

No, I said, hit can not be

Yes, she said, hit is, I am flowin and movin away from here lak water down hill.

No, I said, and I did not know I had yelled hit out till the sound come lak I was yellin to somebody across the river.

Don't you fret and grieve Ashby, she said. Don't you take on.
No, I yelled.

Yes, she said, and I do not grieve for me. I grieve because I never brought you no good lak hit is for women, Ashby.

Oh Marie, I said, you give me what was to give. I laid in the dark till you come and they was a sparkle in you give light to my eyes. I seen the sparkle and I put out my hand towards 'hit lak a child baby not knowin what hit is. I sinned and I made you take on my sin and hit was flesh lust. A man dont love no woman true but in Gods eye but if he loves her in his pore man way maybe hit can learn him, to love the Lord. Hit is lak a school and the young un goes to school and they learns him to spell and if he studies on hit he gits so he can read the Lords blessed word. Oh, Marie, I said to her, you learned me to spell, and I see hit clear.

She did not say nuthin, but she looked at me and I seen the sparkle in her. Hit come of a sudden lak long afore, and her layin sick now.

Marie, I said, I see hit clear now and not never afore.

She looked at me and she said, I will give little Frank a big kiss and a hug for his Pappy. She said not air other word.

The next evenin her sperit taken hits flight and left me to mourn.

Hit was Pearl washed her and fanned them flies after she was layin dead. We was not near no town or settlemint. We did not see no houses or nuthin but woods and cane thickits all that next day. I did not want to put her in the ground in no woods or cane thickit lak a varmint. Hit was August and the river was low with drount. The water did not hardly move. I set and looked at a old black stub of a dead tree and hit taken nigh all that mornen to git where hit was. Then hit taken all evenin to git where I could not see hit. We taken two days to git to a settlemint. Pearl set there and fanned them flies and tears come down her cheeks.

At the settlemint we bought them boards to make a coffin for Marie. We paid two dollars and twenty cents and Jasper and me made hit. We put her in the ground where they was a church and Christian folks was standin there.

I mourned for Marie. When my Pappy died I did not mourn for him. When my Mammy lay cold and dead, hit was not in me to mourn. My heart was lak flint rock in me and cuttin, but hit was not mournin. When little Frank died hit was not mournin I done. I run mad lak a dog on the mountain. But now I mourned for Marie and for all them I seen taste the bitterness and take there flight. When a man ain't in God he can not mourn. He cannot truly mourn. I seen them not in God as fell down on the ground and tore there hair, but hit is a way of puttin a curse on God. Hit ain't mournin of a truth. After Marie died I set on the boat and looked at the river and smelled the mud stinkin where the water had done gone down low, and I seen how Marie was goin to lay in the stinkin ground, and I nigh put a curse on God. But hit was not mournin. Hit was a wildness and hit tears a man in two pieces. But to mourn in God and of his will is a kind of sweetness. Hit is gittin closter to them as is dead than ever you was and them livin and drawin breath. Hit is a gift God give, and I give praise.

They put Marie in the ground and I knowed how hit is to mourn. I mourned for her and for my Pappy and my Mammy and for Frank, and knowed Gods will.

We stayed in the settlemint three weeks and we worked and was amongst Christian folks and we give testifyin for the Lord.

Then we come agin on the river.

We come where they was fields and the corn was standin tall and yeller and ready for folks to come with wagins. I never seen no corn lak hit in Custiss. And I seen big fields for pasture and horses and cows standin. I seen them houses. They was big and white with paint on them and I seen folks settin in front or standin. Hit was lak a country I never heard tell.

Then we come nigh the city. They was smoke on the sky. Murry seen the smoke was off, and Pearl said hit was the city.

We come in the city under them bridges and seen all the folks walkin and ridin. We come in to the bank and Murry jumped off and taken the rope. They was folks ever where. More than a man could name. They was thick lak the corn we seen.

STATEMENT OF ASHBY WYNDHAM 231

They is folks here as walks in sin, I said, and folks as walks in God. Hit is a field to the harvest. We are here and we are goin to testify to the saved and to the unsaved.

Old Man Lumpkin said amen.

We stood in the street and we testified. Folks was comin and goin. They was them as scoffed and scorned and them as hearkened. We went in the city where the folks was thickest and we stood on the street and sang a song and rejoiced. Pearl sang good and Murry, and me and Mr. Lumpkin we taken the bass burden. We sang about Mary and her only son.

Mary had a only son
The Jews and Romans had him hung
Keep yore hand on the plow hold on.

They taken him to Cavalree
And there they hung him on a tree
Keep yore hand on the plow hold on.

We sung how they done hit and how he died to save. We told how he had done saved our souls and hit was peace in our hearts.

A police man come and said how we could not sing and testify. I told him how the Lord said his blessed word was for ever man. I showed him the place in the book. He said he could not help what hit said for us to git on.

We went to another place where they was folks movin and standin. We sung and testified. Hit was another police man come and said to git on.

We taken another stand and hit was the same. Ever where hit was the same. I tried to tell them how hit was and showed hit to them in the book but they said for us to git on. I was sore in my heart.

A saved man has got joy and rejoicin in his heart and he is bustin to tell. He has got Gods word in him and he has got peace and he has got to pour hit out to them as has ears. Hit is a joy to pour hit out and the joy is withouten end. But you dont let him tell and pour hit out of his heart and his heart is sore. He is lak a woman got a baby and her breast has got milk for that

air baby and hit is a joy when hit takes hit suck and is helt to the tit. But you take that woman away from that air baby and her breast is swole and sore for the fulness. My heart was sore.

I told them was with me how hit was.

Pearl said for us to git to the boat and git on hit and leave.

I said why.

She said she was afeard of them police.

Jasper said he knowed them. He said they could not do nuthin but put you in jail. He said they would not beat no woman.

Pearl said she was not afeard of bein beat.

I am afeard of bein beat, Jasper said. They shore beat me one time when they taken me. I am afeard of bein beat but I will do what Ashby says. I aim to do Gods will.

I ain't afeard of bein beat, Pearl said. But they put you in jail and you lay there and they ain't nuthin for you. You are alone. And they let you out and they ain't nuthin for you or nobody. Hit does you harm.

They is God for you, I said.

Oh, God, she said, I am a pore woman and I am afeard to be alone. I need what help they is. I need them with me as has God in there heart to lift me up. Oh, God, she said, I am weak and frail.

I did not say nuthin. We went on down to the boat. I did not know nuthin to say. I was waitin for hit to come on me what to say.

We et and I read to them out of the book what is a ever present help. We prayed to God.

What we goin to do, Pearl ast.

I dont rightly know, I said. Hit will come on me, I said.

We taken our rest for hit was dark.

I nigh never slept that enduren night. I laid and called to God.

When light come I rose up and taken the book. I opened hit and looked and lo, I seen. Hit said, and Jesus said unto him no man havin put his hand to the plow and lookin back, is fittin for the Kingdom of God.

I knowed hit for a sign and come of God.

What we goin to do, Pearl ast me.

I read her what hit said.

Oh God, she said.

I laid in jail, Jasper said. when I was a sinful man, and taken hit. I reckin I can take hit now I aim to walk in God.

Oh God, Pearl said, I am weak and frail.

The Lord will keep holt on you with his hand, I said.

We went in the city lak afore. We sung and we give testifyin. Ever time a police man come and said for us to git on. But hit was all. They did not take nobody to jail. And ever time we come to another place and taken our stand.

Hit was after dinner time Mrs. Lumpkin come sick. She set on the pavemint and puked. After a spell she said she did not feel so bad. But I said for Old Man Lumpkin and Pearl to git her to the boat. And they done hit. Me and Jasper and Murry, we stayd and give testifyin some more. Then we come to the boat.

Mrs. Lumpkin was some better but porely.

She was porely the next mornin. I said for Pearl to stay with her while me and Jasper and Old Man Lumpkin went in the city. We come to a big market where folks brung vegitables and chick-ins and such to sell and folks in the city comes and buys hit. We stood where they come in and went out and I read to them out of the book.

A police man come and said, for Christ sake you all git on somewheres else so I won't have to run you in.

I said to him we done come in Gods name.

Well for Christ sake, he said, you go somewheres else in Gods name and quit worryin folks.

I read to him what the book said.

Save hit for Sunday, he said, and git on.

We went round to another door where folks was.

Old Man Lumpkin said how he was worrit how Mrs. Lumpkin was makin out. I said I would go down to the boat and see how she was makin out. He was a old man and hit was hard for him to climb back up the hill. I said I would git a docter if she was

not makin out so good and come tell him. I told him and Jasper to wait and not do no readin or testifyin or nuthin. I did not want them to git in no trouble and me not there.

I come to the boat and Mrs. Lumpkin was still porely. I said I was aimin to git a docter and she said naw, for the money. I said the money was not nuthin and her layin there and not makin out no better. She said naw, and I was argyin with her and of a sudden Pearl yelled somethin. Pearl was out front of the house part. She yelled agin, and I come out.

Hit is Murry, she yelled.

I seen Murry runnin down the hill. Then I seen a man behind him. Hit was a police man. The police man was yellin for him to stop but he never paid him no mind. They was another police man back up the hill was comin too. The first police man had a pistil in his hand I seen. I yelled for Murry to stop but he never.

The police man shot off his pistil but I seen he did not mean to shoot Murry.

Murry run up the board we had laid to the boat. He yelled they done taken Jasper and Old Man Lumpkin. He kicked that board in the water and he tried right quick to cut that rope as helt the boat. He taken out his knife to cut hit. They says how Murry taken out his knife to cut the police man but he never. He is a good boy and has got true peace in his heart. He did not mean nuthin when he broke loose from the police man up to the markit and tripped him up and run. He was afeard lak a young un, and taken no thought.

The first police man got there and he grabbed that big board out of the water. He was tryin to lay hit to the boat. Murry tried to kick hit loose but he slip and fell.

The other police man got there and he was yellin.

Then Pearl yelled right behind me. I looked round and seen her. She had that there old squirrel rifle of Jasper in her hand.

Hit looked lak I could not say nuthin. Hit all come of a sudden.

Them police men throwed the board on and was yellin. One of them put his foot on the board.

Oh God, Pearl said loud.

Pearl, I yelled, Pearl. And I aimed to grab holt of that rifle.
She shot off that old squirrel rifle.

I seen that police man put his hands on his stummick afore
he fell in the water.

Murry had got up and was cuttin on the big rope. He cut hit.

I felt the river take holt of the boat. Hit was not much for
the water was low with the drout but we had done slipped out
good from the bank. The police man was gittin the other one
out of the water.

I seen Pearl standin there. She still had holt of that rifle lak
she never knowed she helt hit. She was watchin that police man
and them folks what come runnin.

Pearl, I said.

She turned right slow, and looked at me.

I said, Pearl, give me that rifle.

Then she looked down at hit. Then she said, Oh God.

Give hit to me Pearl, I said.

All of a sudden she throwed hit in the river.

Pearl, I said then and knowed what she was goin to do. Hit
was lak somebody told me. I made to ketch her by the barest.
She nigh lak to got in the river. But I had my holt good.

We laid there where we fell. She was tryin and strivin to git
loose but I helt my holt. She was beatin on me with her hands
to git loose. Then she started to cry and she said God damn me.
She said God damn you Ashby Wyndham, God damn you to hell
you Ashby Wyndham you son of a bitch. She said them things
and more what she never meant or knowed. She scratched my
face with her finger nails till the blood come out. She bit me on
my arm to make me let go my holt, but I never.

I yelled for Murry to help me and he done hit. We got holt of
her good and helt her hands. Then I said to Murry I could keep
holt of her and for him to git the oar and put the boat to the
bank. Then he taken the oar lak I said and was tryin when I
heard that motor boat comin. Hit was them police men as taken
us.

They come to us and got on and I said I was tryin to put the boat to the bank and wait for them lak hit was Gods will.

I bet, one of them said but hit was the truth I spoke.

They taken us to the jail.

I am in the jail now and I lay here. I lay here and I pray to God to show me his face. Oh God make me to rejoice agin and in my salvation. I ast to know and hit is my weakness. Pearl laid holt on salvation and come out from the house of abominations. She put off her sin and she was rejoicin. Her heart was full of joy and all she aimed to do was testify to folks and name her joy and salvation. But if salvation had not taken holt on her she would be in Hulltown and smilin yit. She would not be layin and holdin her eyes squinched up and not sayin nuthin nor not takin bite or sup. Oh God she laid off one sin for salvation and salvation taken her to another sin. She kilt a man and hit is a bigger sin.

Oh Lord yore salvation hit moves lak the wind. Hit blows the pore mans heart lak a dead leaf. Hit is lak the wind and no man ain't seen hit come or go. Oh Lord yore foot has been set in the dark place and hit is not seen. Oh Lord yore will has run lak the fox and sly. The pore mans mind sniffs after hit lak a hound dog. But the scent is done lost and the ways of hits goin.

Oh Lord have mercy on Pearl where she lays.

Have mercy on me and not turn yore face away.

I have writ down the truth lak hit was.

I am respectfully

ASHBY PORSUM WYNDHAM.

by R. M. Weaver

THE OLDER RELIGIOUSNESS IN THE SOUTH

OF the many factors which have conspired to make the Southern people a distinct cultural group, so that it remains possible today to speak of "the mind of the South," none has received so little informative discussion as their peculiar religious temper. The liberal journals satirize the Bible Belt and attack "fundamentalism," which they identify with ignorance and general wrong-headedness, and the sociological writers, always chary of anything implying a metaphysic, handle it gingerly if at all. Yet this religious temper is definitely a survival, whose history can be traced as successfully as that of the feudal system or the tradition of chivalry. The conservative section of the country has clung to "the old time religion." It is the purpose of this paper to indicate some of the antecedents of that religion in our common heritage.

It is plain that just as there was much in the economic and social structure of the Old South to suggest Europe before the Great Plague and the peasant rebellions, so there was much in its religious attitude to recall the period before the Reformation. For although the South was heavily Protestant, its attitude toward religion was essentially the attitude of orthodoxy: it was a simple acceptance of a body of belief, an innocence of protest and schism by which religion was left one of the unquestioned and unquestionable supports of the general settlement under which men live. One might press the matter further and say that it was a doctrinal innocence, for the average Southerner knew little and probably cared less about casuistical theology: what he recognized was the acknowledgement, the submissiveness of the will,

and that general respect for order, natural and institutional, which is piety. In short, there was a religious as well as a political Solid South, as Bishop Poteat has pointed out. Such disputes as occurred among churchmen were ecclesiastical rather than theological—saving a few striking exceptions—and the laymen themselves preferred not to regard religion as a matter for discussion. Religion was a matter for profession, and after one had professed, he became a member of a religious brotherhood, but this did not obligate him to examine the foundations of belief or to assail the professions of others. The Southerner did not want a reasoned belief, but a satisfying dogma, and the innumerable divisions which occurred on the Southern and Western frontiers must be ascribed to a religious intensity together with an absence of discipline rather than to a desire to effect a philosophic synthesis, as was elsewhere the case. In 1817 *THE WESTERN GAZETTEER AND EMIGRANTS' DIRECTORY* reported of the condition of religion in Kentucky: "Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Seceders are the prevailing sects; they manifest a spirit of harmony and liberality toward each other, and whatever may have been said to the contrary, it is a solemn truth, that religion is nowhere more respected than in Kentucky." Throughout the South and West there occurred the anomalous condition of an incredible flowering of sects together with the more primitive type of emotional response to religion. Travelers expressed a double amazement at the multiplicity of sects and at the lack of friction or ill will between them.

This curious circumstance is susceptible of explanation. The religious Solid South expressed itself in a determination to preserve for religion the character of divine revelation. Superficially, the difference between a backwoods convert, with his extraordinary camp-meeting exhibitionism, and the restrained and mannered Episcopalian of a seaboard congregation, seems very great. Yet it must be borne in mind that despite the different ways they chose to assert religious feeling, both were inimical to the spirit of rationalism. And if the spirit of rationalism is looked upon

as the foe of religion, then it must be admitted that orthodox Christianity was as safe in the hands of one as the other.

New England, on the contrary, was settled in the early years largely by people who had been embroiled in religious feuds, which they found occasion for renewing after they had set themselves up in the New World. The doctrinal differences which resulted in the exiling of Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams, in the withdrawal of Thomas Hooker from the Bay Colony, and which later cost Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson their pulpits are instructive cases in point. Such troubles arise only when egotistical and self-willed people make assent a matter of intellectual conviction. In New England the forces of dissent finally won the day. The right to criticize and even to reject the dogmas of Christianity came at length to overshadow the will to believe them, so greatly did the tide run against the conformists, and in the nineteenth century Emerson, Channing, and Transcendentalism killed insistence upon uniformity in this once most orthodox of sections. A conclusion to be drawn from these events is that New England, acting out of that intellectual pride which has always characterized her people, allowed religion to become primarily a matter for analysis and debate, if we take here the point of view of the conservative religionist. Instead of insisting upon a simple grammar of assent, which a proper regard for the mysteries would dictate, they conceived it their duty to explore principles, and when they had completed the exploration, they came out, not with a secured faith, but with an ethical philosophy, which illuminated much, but which had none of the binding power of the older creed. There followed as characteristic results Unitarianism and Christian Science, two intellectual substitutes for a more rigorous religious faith. While this was going on, Southern churchmen were fiercely assailing the "Arian heresy in New England" and were declaring that when man uses reason to test Scripture "the inevitable logical result is Atheism."

The results of the divergence did not appear at the beginning,

for originally both Virginia and the New England colonies conceived religion as a part of the general program of government. The instructions drawn up in 1606 for the Virginia Company required that "the true word and service of God be preached, planted and used," and further provision for conformity was made by the Divine and Martial Laws of 1611, which required that everyone who then resided in Virginia, or who should thereafter arrive, should make profession of religious belief, and if found deficient, should repair to a minister for instruction. The first General Assembly, moreover, passed a law ordaining universal church attendance. This, together with various laws against profanation and the sins of the flesh, was enforced with regularity and some severity. Virginia Episcopalians and New England Dissenters thus began *pari passu* the suppression of what they considered alien and subversive views. As time went on, however, their paths separated; the religiousness which in Virginia had originally been supported by laws, remained as a crystallized popular sentiment; in New England, always more responsive to impulses from abroad, it weakened and virtually disappeared. New Englanders cultivated metaphysics and sharp speculation; Southerners generally, having saved their faith, as they thought, from the whole group of pryers, reformers, and troublesome messiahs, settled back and regarded it as a part of their inheritance which they did not propose to have disturbed.

Such religious persecution as occurred in Virginia found its victims not among heretics in theology, but among actual or potential disturbers of the peace. The Quakers, who were considered the foremost of these, were treated with extreme hostility throughout the seventeenth century. The charge leveled against these zealots was not that of doctrinal heresy; it was that their principles tended to undermine the whole institutional character of religion, and the state as well. They would not contribute to the support of the established church; they did not hold public assemblies; and they would not bear arms in defense of the commonwealth. It is little wonder that to colonial administrators these evidences sa-

vored of disaffection to the point of disloyalty, and that Quakers were commonly described as a "pestilential sect" and "an unruly and turbulent sort of people." The General Assembly of Virginia of the winter of 1659-1660 declared that their beliefs tended to "destroy religion, laws, communities, and all bonds of civil society," and passed laws forbidding the immigration of Quakers and banishing those already in the colony. They were being punished not for the sin of theological schism, but for the sin of political non-cooperation, and although these are not necessarily unrelated, the happier fate of other sects within the state suggests that the authorities were indifferent to doctrine which had only theological implications.

The history of Unitarianism in the South provides a further commentary on the Southern conception of the role of religion. While the Puritan was attempting to make his religion conform to the canons of logic, conscience, or ethical propriety, the Southerner clung stubbornly to the belief that a certain portion of life must remain inscrutable, that religion offers our only means of meeting it, and that reason cannot here be a standard of interpretation. Unitarianism, as a conspicuously speculative kind of divinity, was agreeable to those who test belief by reason, but unattractive to those who long for a sustaining creed and a means of emotional fulfillment. Captain Basil Hall in his *TRAVELS IN NORTH AMERICA IN THE YEARS 1827 AND 1828* gives an amusing account of a Unitarian preacher whom he heard in Boston: "He then embarked on the great ocean of religious controversy, but with such consummate skill, that we scarcely knew we were at sea till we discovered that no land was in sight." It must be confessed that in the South there were few congregations of a sufficiently intellectual disposition to enjoy this kind of voyaging. Bishop Francis J. Grund wrote: "The inhabitants of the South are principally Episcopalians, and as much attached to authority in religion as they are opposed to it in politics. They consider Unitarianism as a religious democracy; because it relies less on the authority of the Scriptures, than on the manner in which the

authority of the clergy expounds them, and retains too little mysticism in its form of worship to strike the multitude with awe." And James Freeman Clarke found that in Kentucky the "nature of the people" demanded a more emotional discourse than the typical Unitarian sermon provided.

A fairly intensive missionary effort succeeded in establishing Unitarian societies in Baltimore, Augusta, Savannah, Mobile, New Orleans, Nashville, Louisville, and a few other cities, but most of these dwindled after a brief period of flourishing. As it became plain that religious radicalism in New England was tending toward anarchy, and more especially as radical clergymen became prominently identified with Abolitionism, Southern religious orthodoxy hardened, and the Unitarian societies became powerless to propagate themselves.

General evidence that the South afforded poor soil for religious radicalism may be further seen in the following distribution of churches: in 1860 this section had one of the 51 Swedenborgian churches in the United States, 20 of the 664 Universalist, and none of the 17 Spiritualist. In his *AUTOBIOGRAPHY* Peter Cartwright rejoiced that during the Great Revival "Universalism was almost driven from the land."

Among all classes in the South an opinion obtained that religion should be a sentiment. Where the people were refined, the sentiment was refined; where they were demonstrative and disorderly, it was likely to be such. Among the aristocratic congregations of seaboard communities, overt expression was at a minimum. The apathy with which such a cultivated congregation regarded its faith and the labors of its ministry may be illustrated through a story reported by Harriet Martineau: "A southern clergyman mentioned to me, obviously with difficulty and pain, that though he was as happily placed as a minister could be, treated with friendliness and generosity by his people, and so cherished as to show that they were satisfied, he had one trouble. During all the years of his ministry no token had reached him that he had religiously impressed their minds, more or less. They

met regularly and decorously on Sundays, and departed quietly, and there was an end. He did not know that any one discourse had affected them more than another; and no oportunity was offered him of witnessing any religious emotion among them whatever." A tradition of gentility, and a belief that the content of religion was settled combined to produce this condition. All agitation was frowned upon. Restless and skeptical minds, who would dispute the grounds of the canon, were looked upon as persons inimical to a comfortable and orderly design for living. Refuting a point of doctrine brought one a reputation not so much for intellectual distinction as for perverseness and ill will. Because of her zeal for inquiry New England was contemptuously referred to as the land of "notions." A writer in *THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER*, drawing a contrast between Southern and Northern people, found the latter lacking in a sense of measure: ". . . having liberty which they do not appreciate, they run into anarchy,—being devotional, they push their piety to the extremes of fanaticism,—being contentious withal, they are led to attack the interests of others merely because those interests do not comport with their ideas of right."

What the Southerner desired above all else in religion was a fine set of images to contemplate, as Allen Tate has shown in his *RELIGION AND THE OLD SOUTH*. The contemplation of these images was in itself a discipline in virtue, which had the effect of building up in him an inner restraint. And thus a sense of restraint, and a willingness to abide by the tradition were universally viewed as marks of the gentleman; on the other hand, the spirit of discontent, of aggressiveness, and of inquisitiveness was associated with those who had something to gain by overturning the established order.

In consequence it is not difficult to see why the Southern gentleman looked upon religion as a great conservative agent and a bulwark of those institutions which served him. Spokesmen of the South were constantly criticizing Northerners for making religion a handmaid of social and political reform. A critic of

Dr. Channing, writing in the *SOUTHERN QUARTERLY REVIEW*, declared: "It is not very usual for the clergy of our country to enter with zeal upon the arena of politics. The department of a religious teacher is supposed to lie in a different sphere, and to embrace different duties; and the people generally listen to him with aversion and reluctance when he meddles with secular subjects." Some years later a writer in *THE SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER* thus described the North's mixing of religious and secular causes: "Her priesthood prostitutes itself to the level with a blackguard, and enters the secular field of politics, in the spirit of a beer-house bully; and the politician as carelessly invades the sanctuary of the priest." Although Southern clergymen occasionally invoked the word of God to defend Southern institutions, especially when these were being assailed, as a general rule they were overwhelmingly opposed to the use of the church as a tool for secular reform. The evangelical sects aimed at a conversion of the inner man; the conservative ones at the exposition of a revealed ethic; but both regarded themselves as custodians of the mysteries, little concerned with social agitation, and out of the reach of winds of political doctrine.

Reverence for the "word of God" has been a highly important aspect of Southern religious orthodoxy. Modern discussions of fundamentalism have overlooked the fact that belief in revealed knowledge is the essence of religion in its older sense, so that this point perhaps needs special emphasis. The necessity of having some form of knowledge which will stand above the welter of earthly change and bear witness that God is superior to accident led Thomas Aquinas to establish his famous dichotomy, which says, briefly, that whereas some things may be learned through investigation and the exercise of the reasoning powers, others must be given or "revealed" by God. Man cannot live under a settled dispensation if the postulates of his existence must be continually revised in accordance with knowledge furnished by a nature filled with contingencies. Nature is a vast unknown; in the science of nature there are constantly

appearing emergents which, if allowed to affect spiritual and moral verities, would destroy them by rendering them dubious, tentative, and conflicting. It is therefore imperative in the eyes of the older religionists that man have for guidance in this life a body of knowledge to which the "facts" of natural discovery are either subordinate or irrelevant. This body is the "rock of ages," firm in the vast sea of human passion and error. Moral truth is not something which can be altered every time science widens its field of induction. If moral philosophy must wait upon natural philosophy, all moral judgments become temporary, relative, and lacking in those sanctions which alone make them effective. And though probably no people were more ignorant of the *SUMMA THEOLOGICA* than the inarticulate and little-read rural Southern population, this Thomist dualism lies implicit in their opposition to scientific monism, the most persistent of the South's medieval heritages. Then, as now, it explains their dogged adherence to what is taught "in the Book" and their indifference to empirical disproofs.

Emerson and his colleagues founded their revolt against New England orthodoxy on the principle of the continuity of knowledge and the prerogative of the individual mind to judge and determine. They were successful, and the country concluded that the victory was won everywhere; but in the South the battle has not yet been fought. In the present century, when publicity attending the theory of evolution forced the issue, there was widespread amazement that legislatures representing sovereign states were prepared to vote revealed knowledge precedence over natural, for such, in a broad way of viewing the matter, is the significance of the anti-evolution laws. This could not have surprised anyone who knew the tradition, for in the South there had never been any impeachment of "the Word," and science had not usurped the seats of the prophets. It may therefore be proper to describe the South as "backward" if one employs the word not in a vaguely prejudicial sense, but with some reference to the continuum of history. The South was striving to preserve a

centuries-old distinction, which the North was condemning as error. Indeed, it has been a settled practice with Southern spokesmen to describe the differences between North and South in religious language. When the period of sectional separation came, more than one Southern churchman could be found placing the blame for the sins of New England, the most notable of which was Abolitionism, upon "the great Socinian heresy." This was an open attack upon the whole movement of deism and rationalism, which by the middle of the eighteenth century had captured the cultivated orders of Europe, and by the middle of the next, much of New England and the North. In the midst of the Gilded Age the Reverend R. L. Dabney, a celebrated Presbyterian divine, pronounced pragmatism the equivalent of atheism, and fundamentalist leaders today regard the purely scientific view of man as only the modern pose of godlessness.

It cannot be denied that during the period of the French Revolution there was much religious skepticism in certain Southern educational centers and among elements of the Southern upper class. It was, however, a transient phase, confined while it lasted to small cultivated groups, and it disappeared so completely in the antebellum years that it can be properly ignored in any account of the molding of the Confederate South. Skepticism is always an achievement of an intellectual aristocracy, who by education and through access to libraries become accustomed to the critical handling of ideas. At the close of the eighteenth century and for perhaps two decades afterwards some Southern aristocrats considered it fashionable to embrace Deism and to flaunt a disrespect for the Bible. Jefferson, who in this period translated twenty chapters of Volney's *Ruins*, is, of course, the best known Southern exponent of free-thinking. The irreligion of the day turned Williamsburg, home of venerable William and Mary College, into a veritable seat of infidelity; it flourished surprisingly at the University of North Carolina; it crept across the mountains and infected illustrious Transylvania in the Blue Grass Region of Kentucky, shocking Amos Kendall by the ex-

tent of its prevalence; and it penetrated the University of Georgia, then in its early years. It remained, however, distinctly an upper-class attitude, sharply localized and without power to affect the essential religiousness of the Southern populace. After 1830, when the South as if by prescience turned to a defence of all conservative ideals, it declined almost to the point of extinction.

One might suppose that the powerful example of Jefferson would have started a school of rationalism below the Potomac, but in this matter, as in others, Jefferson failed to take root in his section. His doctrine of states' rights and his agrarianism were cherished, but his religious liberalism, like most else that he learned from the French radicals, was ignored. His influence waned so rapidly that within a few years after his death the Presbyterians were able to force the resignation of an atheist professor from the University of Virginia, which he had aspired to make the very citadel of unfettered thought. In the same period South Carolina fundamentalists compelled the removal of President Cooper of the state university because he had questioned the authority of the Pentateuch.

Some notice must be taken of the influence of nineteenth century science upon the religious temper of the Old South. It has been a common assumption that Southerners devoted their minds to politics, the classics, and the novels of Sir Walter Scott, remaining blandly innocent of the discoveries in which this century was so fruitful. Like other generalized conceptions, this one is broadly true, but omits much which would qualify the picture. Thomas Cary Johnson in a survey of scientific interests in the antebellum South has corrected many overstatements of Southern indifference to the spirit of the age. He found natural science taught not only in colleges, where it sometimes led the list of elective subjects, but even in female seminaries; and he names a number of Southerners who proved themselves fertile in theory and invention. His study, however, affords little if any evidence that this scientific interest, more widespread than is

popularly supposed, issued in a skeptical habit of mind. The truth seems clear that the Southern scientist did not carry his scientific speculation to the point at which it becomes an interpretation of the whole of life. Mr. Johnson ascribes the failure of the South to become eminent in scientific thought to the individualism of its people and their unwillingness to coöperate in common enterprises. But it appears nearer the truth to say that the traditional mind of the South, although it recognized in science a fascinating technology, refused to become absorbed in it to the extent of making it either a philosophy of life or a religion. It thus clung to its inherited religious humanism. Unlike the technician, the average Southerner did not feel that he must do a thing because he found that he could do it. It is highly significant that neither the jacobinism of the French Revolution nor the scientific materialism of the century which followed was able to draw him from the view that man holds a central position in the universe under divine guidance.

So the Southern people reached the eve of the Civil War one of the few religious peoples left in the Western World. Into the strange personnel of the Confederate Army, out of "regions that sat in darkness," poured fighting bishops and prayer-holding generals, and through it swept waves of intense religious enthusiasm long lost to history. It is on record that there were more than fifteen thousand conversions in the Army of Northern Virginia alone. And when that army went down in defeat, the last barrier to the secular spirit of science, materialism, and pragmatism was swept away.

It seems an inescapable inference that in the sphere of religion the Southerner has always been hostile to the spirit of inquiry. He felt that a religion which is intellectual only is no religion. His was a natural piety, expressing itself in uncritical belief and in the experience of conversion, not in an ambition to perfect a system, or to tidy up a world doomed to remain forever deceptive, changeful, and evil. For him a moral science made up of postulates and deductions and taking no cognizance of the in-

scrutable designs of Providence and the ineluctable tragedies of private lives was no substitute. Whether he was a Virginia Episcopalian, dozing in comfortable dogmatic slumber, or a Celt, transplanted to the Appalachian wilderness and responding to the intense emotionalism of the religious rally, he wanted the older religion of dreams and drunkenness—something akin to the rituals of the Medieval Church, and to the Eleusinian mysteries of the ancients.

MONOLOGUE

(TO ALI-BABA PERHAPS)

Sir, that the tongue spews up a lively rubbish
Is what I mean; the eyes and ears tucked into bed
Do so confuse and sludge our barest ups and downs.
It is for this the larklung chirms at teeth,
Whit-whit of words wee in the mouth.
Sir, if leaves tick out time in a wash of wind
Responsibility falls home: my temporal toes
Return to view, obvious and bunched,
Such mimics of my emptiness, but all asleep.
Think, sir, if larks chirr, I am their parrot;
Men move not but their moving makes a me,
A ghoster after gold, the silly junk and jet
Of spectrum in one-and-forty thieves.
Their souls are rippling sweat for saying sesame.

—by William Arrowsmith

FOR THE CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST

At best, bee-rich, the Christmas breakfast is
The cup and service of the summer soul.
Heart, heart is honeycombed in Christ
(the buckwheat—, the clover-comb, both sweet)

Now be the easy breaking of the fast
That follows on the fiction of the summer soul
In such incredibilities of light: blue air,
But chiefly sun, intoxicant, mostly incredible.

The falling season fasts and feeds on leaves,
And Christ more crisp for the eating heart
And cordial hands. It is not finality
When things ferment, or a posture of mind.

At best, the Christmas breakfast reunites
Soul with body and bee with hive. It is
Soul's honey and body's comb, bee-rich.

—by *William Arrowsmith*

FOR CARTER MORGAN

In Memoriam

Quickly, while the autumn still projects
The ripe publicity of normal death,
The privilege of rain is private,
Falling like a hugger-mugger of the heart,
And all the mind a token of that sound.
I have a mind keyed up to falling down
That best, by opposition, still preserves
His seasonal securities in sun.
Reflective rain, so simple at this noon
That adumbrates the four years since,
Refracts, by some prismatic parallel
In mind and light, a sum of shadow
To one small incandescent bow,
The spectrum and the absence of a friend.

—by *William Arrowsmith*

THE NOVEMBER GHOSTS

The rain slants from the clouded light
Where I pass wetted, pale with cold,
Along the old way aimlessly.
The bell's sounds quieted by the wind
I count with trembling spotted hands
And work my stiffening face.
So he I sing of passes, murmurs:
"And I must wander in the storm."

The Queen of Night's bright face
Or the old man bending with his sticks:
In warmer years, you watched them rise
Past wet stacks, the fields' half-silvered straw;
Mixed with the west wind and veiling airs,
You might have heard, hampered by the weeds' saw,
The rattle of Night oiling her worn gear—
Imagined her, soft in her sickle, crescent car.

Who loved you then? A cloud? A star.
Beckoning to you from the blind train
Of the old glittering queen,
She trailed her firefly-light line
Across the sky's night-backed pane—
Not knowing your eyes could discern
Only you, dew-bedecked, luckless, yearning,
Looking back at you from the crooked pane.

—by Randall Jarrell

THE LABORATORY

In the technician's thicket
The Arabian nightmares swarm;
 I warmed up agar
 And changed their water
And counted the creatures till my head swam.

Confirmed by the sawdust and chicken-wire,
The ingenious rodents waited
 To die on the rations
 And odd preparations
The instructors and children created.

I killed enough frogs to stock a bog
Or embarrass a famishing stork,
 And after the first
 I felt no remorse—
It was only a part of the work.

I started habitually realizing
Why the hangman feels no misgivings;
 The sexton too
 Sees nothing new
In the face the clods are falling to:

When the cross is exchanged for a cipher
And the scales are replaced by a rake,
 Says the Hog to the Dove:
 “Won't you be my love?”
And we can be married tonight by the Snake.”

—by Randall Jarrell

ANOTHER ARMISTICE

It was the only April I have known
When all things died. The mute and questioning looks
Of lean and hungry men still marched behind
Long after the wild cheers, abashed, fell back.
And Traveller's slow, reluctant steps, it seemed,
Would hold me back as though some precipice
Lay just ahead. Yes, easier to die,
The President had warned, than live to hear
An alien story told in strange new days,
Or watch our sons endorse pernicious gods
Reciprocating urbane pleasantries
In unknown tongues. This the real victory
Which Time does not repudiate, despite
A soldier's soon forgotten gallantry.

Unwritten pacts are not less violate.
Had I but said the word, while there was time—
Here in this only England left, where fields
Yet keep their annual fidelity,
The banqueters have set an obscene meal,
But pride and hope compound an ersatz bread
For those who hold idea more than form,
Refuse the empty shell of the heretic dream.
Why should we leave the child we sired except
Since it was dead another sire? What odds
When victory's price is that for which we fight
Than hang the musket over the clay hearth
To rust: cadavers do not keep a dream.

This is no Wilderness, nor Antietam,
When sterile microscopes, outflanked, bombard
An adolescent dream to reverie,
Myopics from Samaria besiege

A blurring focus. If a fractured lens
Perverts the still resilient specimen,
The prematurely senile dream survives,
And old men's tales to tell to your son's sons
Yet unbaptized, as age lends laxity
To ancient bonds of silence, self-imposed,
And bonds of silence, self-imposed, relax,
Of hoof-beats in the night, long rides at dawn,
Of Forrest back in Middle Tennessee,
Jeb Stuart riding hard 'round Chambersburg,
Of Jackson crossing the river at Chancellorsville.
Perhaps defeat was kind, for dreams die hard;
To other dreams alone they yield, and slow,
But under pressure crystalize, endure.

—by Thomas Haile

THE MAGNOLIA IS A HARDY TREE

High up on Laurel's hill, not far above
Where Lombard pines raise leafy palisades
Protesting V-8's honking hungrily,
A slender shaft where once Fort Sanders stood
Now reads, "To those who fell in the assault . . ."
Though less imposing than the stone raised by
A stranger's hand indecently one block
Away, the antique ivy, unimpressed,
Proclaims its sturdy loyalty, resents
This last indignity. More tactful than
The U. D. C.'s, magnolias provide
A privacy these dead have earned, disclaim
A son's supine concession that a deep

Sincerity might mitigate old sin.
With calisthenic understanding now
The weak emasculate the dead, preserve
In ten per cent solution passions such
As theirs, hygienic, sterile, and obscene.

A cool breath blows from Appomattox' fields
To waft blonde yankees all along the Loire.
They crowd the Bois and all are well-behaved.
Lithe carpet-baggers from Charlottenburg,
Backwashed by civilization's westward course,
Stride brisk along the Place de l'Opera,
Fulfill the dying scholar's bitter wish.
If they have taken Warsaw and Belgrade,
Remember Richmond proved more difficult,
And Carolina, noting Rotterdam,
Has but contempt for Sherman's clumsiness.
As roses from Nish and Monastir, and grain
From Transylvania's plains must follow soon
Kentucky burley, Louisiana rice,
White Delta cotton, oil from Texas' fields.
While Swedish iron travels Essen-plus,
Provence, Dalmatia, Croatia, too, now learn
That freedom carries surplus value still.

Those who remember Garrison can hear
An organ playing pianissimo
When for a night an alien mystic slept
In the Hradzany, lonely refugee
From the atomic proletariat,
As Lincoln played the rebel President,
Not noting how much more than Richmond burned,
Perhaps the fragrance of magnolias
Disturbed his dreaming, ominous and strong,
Or laurel blooming on some Southern hill,
Perverse and obstinate, for from this new

And spacious land saved up for Time's old age,
Where every town commemorates an old
Historic treason, now magnolias send
Their message to the stricken *fleur de lys*.

An organ plays a dulcet tune but old
For Reconstruction has become a word
Now long familiar to the southern ear.
This New-World Lebensraum which blood preserved,
Seduced to impotence, its culture-gauge
Consumption, added value, retail sales,
Learns labels change like magic-lantern slides
To greet a lusty parvenu and knows
Emancipation bears the trade marks now
Of General Motors, DuPont, Westinghouse.
Where once the overseer tended black
Backs bending over cotton bolls, despised,
His grandson supervises black and white
Both tending rayon, plastics, pig-iron on
Assembly lines blessed by the Rotary.

The gods are come, wine-bibbed, and on the backs
Of dinosaurs no longer ponderous.
Steel-plated pterodactyls in escort
Spread canopies of death across the skies
Of Neo-Cambria, cast black shadows on
A landscape suddenly turned pleistocene.
While Siegfried speaks a dialect Sau-Preuss
Isolde, silent, sits and stares into
A bottomless pool where dead lilies float
And a thin song drifts slowly down the Rhine.
But those who early met at Mecklenburg,
And their son's sons who, near St. Michael's Church,
Renewed the solemn earth-borne heritage,
Know from the Brazos to the James each Spring
Magnolias their silent tocsin sound.

While pharisees in Belgrave Square regret
Crumbs tossed reluctantly and late, down past
The Sava Macedonians plot anew
Against an Alexander in the Wilhelmstrasse.
Down rows of Linden trees a maid's pale wraith
Rides lips compressed but head erect; she knows
That the magnolia is a hardy tree.

—by Thomas Haile

THE THERAPEUTIC WOOD

Observe the therapeutic quality
Of wood, sadistic nudist of the field,
Which, unadorned, bestows humility
As virtue on a lean, long-legged youth,
Kentucky born, who gashed its severed trunk
And split it into rails made functional
In a log-cabin deep in Southern hills
Or a Sangamo County fence, but with
Delusions of Teutonic grandeur damns
The prudish Austrian, expatriate
From still another South, who covered the
Bauernhof's offending youthful nakedness
With fig-leaves of malignant paint. And if
The Landberg's windows give upon a view
Somewhat restricted by the Rhine, perhaps
The light the log-fire gave on winter nights
In Illinois a century ago
Was not so bright, confined to but one room.

—by Thomas Haile

EMPEROR'S VIEW

Two thousand miles of western water
To the east now wed
In holy science of the circle
And moving slow, Diamond Head
Reveals Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Waikiki.

Oahu, where waterfalls are dropped
In silver lines from slow, green mountains,
Once held a sudden one that stopped
For lack of water.

Brown, fearful men ran spearless
Up the steep valley
Before Kamehameha's storm
And over the abrupt Pali
The torrent plunged.

Prince of Hawaii,
Kamehameha won the land
And on it is rested now.
Him I understand.

But we are those who fought by water
And guard a salty crown,
An empty wave where cruisers were,
Grey cruisers settling down,
And the questing deaths of foreign men,
Not men that questing die,
Who are shallow buried here
And do not resting lie.

—by S. T. Clark

1. TRIM WALKING WITH HIS WIFE SEES MIKE
AT A JAIL WINDOW

Are you the Mike I knew
The suntanned
Mike whose heart was part
Of the outland
I agree that I be
You pale in jail
Mike know the sheriff
May can stay
The tariff
If the crime has any rhyme
In the lands where the tree stands
I pistolled
Him in the dim
Light who whistled
The wrong kind of song
With awe I saw
That we were meeting
Face to face at a place
Rigged for greeting
One must say goodday
To thin old men
With beard of wizards
With eyes as cold and old
As those of lizards
Who wait stock still the kill
Of stranger
Between us two I knew
The danger
If he should be
Strolling down to town
He would whistle
A tune of moon
And thistle
Well Mike I would like

To hear the story
Later on with us alone
Now I am sorry
I must say goodday

Come dear I hear children crying
Come dear I fear children dying

—by S. T. Clark

2. TRIM GETS MIKE OUT OF JAIL AND THEY GO ON A BENDER

The sheriff said be no man dead
Beneath the treelimb
He showed me the code
A prisoner has freedom
He and I went by
The tree and we
Met nobody
Found on the ground
No body
No blood in the wood
Heard no word
Of mourning
Though we took to look
All morning
So come with me home
But first a thirst
Needs quenching
After jail comes ale
And wenching
Beyond the place my face

Stares at the stars
Some bawdy
Where's beer to cheer
A body
A girl with a curl
Smiles and whiles
Away the horror
Of the boy whose joy
Turned to terror
Here we are at the bar
Mike if you lack
Romantic data
Have you seen the queen
O waiter
Bring us beer over here
Please bring cheese
With the cracker
Now here's how
With a fragile liquor
A ghost is drunk a toast

Now drink dont think of the body
I think drink drink of the boys body.

—by S. T. Clark

3. MIKE TRIM AND THE QUEEN WALK HOME AND SAY GOODBY

Queen we have been
Where dreams wander
Beyond the silver pond
I wonder
If the boys blue eyes

Still now foretell
In their blue mirrors
This hap and the hope
Chimeras
Twin young men
Walk with while we talk
Lowdown
On what its about
After sundown
Winds blow the ends
Of earth to the hearth
Thanks you are welcome
Seraphim Sheriffim
To thraldom
Of room without rim
Free of the midnight tree
And the junetime frolic
With the prince whose circumstance
Is the phallic
One phenomenon
Recourse from the curse
Of death and mayhem
A camels lift still left
To night and daydream
Sweet if we meet
Again if you are gone
Let history revel
On your lips perhaps
Unravel
The flesh and the wish

But love we leave him with fever
He'll live I gave him a fiver

—by S. T. Clark

CONFESSORAL

Had I, commanded penance, doubted
The antiquity of these offices, as some
Other one before me, of a sudden indignant, flouted
My hopes and washed with my spittle the dumb
Indifferent grime of the saint's knees,
Perhaps Time were forgot and how all ways
It had seemed unpassioned at the groping seas
Of saying writing in unequal days
And millenia on acquiescent beach
Or teasing cliff.

Imperative that—to reach
The door, could I, and even in a place
Of curved stone walls if open to sky sound
The heart's unroofed lament, mind broken in space
Of some minutes contemn the sheltered ground,
All here, in the urinous flood from the burst
Sutures of my soul.

But I have had such first
Desire dried up as some too imaginative man on giving
A ring to a faultless woman might have found
Forgiveness and the sin and the living
And hoping will to sin reduced to sound
Of women's exclamation from the farther room.

—by John Edward Hardy

THE SCHOLAR POET

Under a false October sun
Ground receives a tree's
Ideologies into the common run
Of common impatience and whispered pleas
For place forever lost.

These are the hidden with color in age,
These they that the days broke,
Quietly by pattern set in rage
In sun and coming decrepitude, what time men spoke,
Thinking they were heard, of impatience with green.

My days have left their mark of guile
As food upon my teeth that I sing
Songs only of sadness and cannot smile
On any; but the woman beside me with the thing
Half spoken turns away, dreaming only of how
My smile had seemed once all Pythagoras' song.

*And are you singer now
That the song is finished?*

—by John Edward Hardy

THE CARNIVAL

New years have hold
Of either hand
And pull along
Through carnivals of clowns
And fat men,
Candy fluff
That melts on August afternoons.
Awning brown is borne
On slender skeletons
Of just-gathered boards,
Smelling of saws,
Of the off and on of trains.
Red-rolled tickets,
And the lunging, halting,
Back and forth of Hey-Deys.
Then when the white wheel rolls,
Chair-hung, swung in the lake-blow,
And the hum-blend, no-ending
Liquidness of reach
Untongues from margins of blue abundance,
The new years loose each hand,
And the tilt of an over-shoulder glance
Gathers a foot of carnival,
Warm, round-pacing
Against green compulsion of miles
And the continuance of days.

—by Nancy Shankland

by Randall Jarrell

THE FALL OF THE CITY

[This article was written some time ago, about a play that was written six years ago; it is a criticism of the 1937 MacLeish who wrote *The Fall of the City*, not of the 1942 MacLeish who writes government reports.]

ANY successful play in verse—in a time when the phrase sounds like an Irish bull—is worth an analysis; and *The Fall of the City* has been extraordinarily successful. Almost anyone with a radio has heard it, almost anyone with an anthology has read it; even the college textbooks print it, with prefaces calling it a really topical play, one that has both comprehended and predicted the actual history of our times. “Pioneering in a new medium, the verse play for radio, MacLeish foretold the fate of Vienna by eleven months,” one editor writes; “Prague, Warsaw, Oslo, Amsterdam, Paris—the play was repeated with tragic variations.” But if this is so, *The Fall of the City* is exactly what everyone has been wanting—a good poetic drama about contemporary reality; Poetry and Drama and Society, miserably separated for so many ages, have at last been reunited. How has it been done?

The play begins with the “orotund and professional” voice of the Studio Director. After the conventional “Ladies and gentlemen:/This broadcast comes to you from the city,” he rises for a moment into orotund and professional verse, in a passage full of the abstract, glossy, and geographical lyricism that is a MacLeish trademark. He gets back to business with, “For three days the world has watched this city”; through the newspapers and through broadcasts like this one, the audience assumes. Each day, at twelve o’clock, a dead woman has risen from the grave! MacLeish’s exclamation point notes how unusual

such an event is; that such an event is being broadcast is still more unusual, most hearers will think. It is very easy to believe in broadcasting, fairly easy to believe in dead women rising daily from the grave; but to believe in both at the same time takes the Red Queen. The hearers cannot help distrusting the Studio Director when he tells them, in a conventional Shakespearean passage about omens, that "in a time like ours seemings and portents signify"; that this old-fashioned miracle is a finally important expression of our time, and not merely an expression of the author's liking for a sensational dramatic device.

The announcer takes us away to the city, at "precisely four minutes to twelve," in order to broadcast the fourth resurrection of the dead woman. (Where was he the second and third times? By the fourth time any real broadcasting company would have made it a regular program with a sponsor.) It is a city more suited to miracles than to microphones: a kind of generalized Aztec town, far away in space, farther away in time; there are temples, pyramids, hawks, kites, water-sellers, peasants, horse-raisers, cattle-herders, priests with knives (stone, I regret to say). The announcer, a country boy from way back, is much impressed with the "enormous crowd" of ten thousand people; in their midst, surrounded with plumed fans, sit the "cabinet ministers"! One can see already that the play is a queer and sometimes unfortunate mixture, a kind of allegory: it exists on two levels, one a literal Aztec level, the other an allegorical topical level. These levels, by their conflict, produce all sorts of surface incongruities and anachronisms; and perhaps, under the surface, they never fuse, but remain contradictory—the reader can judge.

The announcer's description of the exotic city rises into suspense; it is almost noon. The dead woman punctually, miraculously rises; she recites a mannered, consciously archaic, conscientiously vague lyric about death. Then after mechanically repeating a prophecy she does not understand, she trails away in a few elegiac measures. Her prophecy is: "The city of master-

less men/Will take a master./There will be shouting then/
Blood after."

To see all the laws of nature broken, four times running, because a small Aztec city is about to be conquered, may very well seem disproportionate to a modern audience. Shakespeare has these miraculous omens because he and his hearers were sure that the world is made that way, that such things always happen; since we are just as sure of the opposite, a contemporary playwright needs an overwhelmingly good reason for using such miracles, especially if his play is an allegorical representation of modern history. MacLeish has none; he simply wants a sensational exotic device to make his play more impressive, and he feels that the play's sensational and exotic setting, along with the announcer's continual reassurances, will soothe us into belief.

The announcer, still afraid that we may still be doubting, makes another Shakespearean speech on the validity of omens; meanwhile the people, after reiterating fragments of the prophecy, suddenly go to pieces, and run yelling around the square, "milling around us like cattle that smell death." Before this MacLeish has made the crowd seem very tough and stolid, full of peasants, farmers' wives, armed horse-raisers and cattle-herders who "look at the girls with their eyes hard/And a hard grin and their teeth showing." Why do they suddenly act like a Girl Scout troop with hysterics? like frightened animals? Because MacLeish makes them act that way throughout the play, no matter what the situation; they are without sense, courage, or any other creditable quality; they respond to everything like complete fools and cowards, are several times compared to animals, and remind you of nothing so much as Hamilton's "great beast."

Suddenly the First Messenger staggers in; helped over to the cabinet ministers, he gives a couple of perfunctory ritual pants, and speaks—not a few gasping sentences, but an energetic and rhetorical two pages. He has run day and night, all the way from the ocean (presumably he was on bad terms with the broadcasting company). The bouncy two-stress lines, like unrhymed

Skeltonics; the Anglo-Saxon alliteration ("He was violent in his vessel:/He was steering in her stern:/He was watching in her waist:/He was peering in her prow . . ."); the mannered archaic parallelism; the primitive syntax ("East over sea-cross has/All taken/Every country . . ."); make one think of Hengist and Horsa carrying a message to Garcia, and lend the messenger a charming but slightly Mother Goose-ish air; his method is one of simple exaggeration. He warns that a mighty conqueror has landed, after overcoming all the lands east of the sea. Those he conquers lead lives of unbelievable shame and degradation; nevertheless, says the messenger, many or all of you will welcome him. Why? The messenger doesn't say. We know all about Fascism, so we are prepared to believe that some of the people will welcome him; but dramatically, in terms of the play, not of its topical application, the welcome is quite unmotivated—we have to assume, as MacLeish does, that the people of the city have some sort of tropism toward slavery and degradation.

How do the people take this additional bad news? with additional hysterics? Their response is exactly the opposite: not one speaks, not one moves; they stand there like docile animals, patiently waiting for the ministers to tell them what to do and what to think. A minister comes from the "huddle" (notice the weight of this word) on the platform; and this First Orator makes a long, highly rhetorical speech. (There is no dialogue in the whole play—nothing but long speeches, songs, the announcer's descriptions, and choppy phrases from the crowd.) His oration is full of vulgar and specious effectiveness, inflated generalities, plays on words, childish logic-chopping, mechanical and repetitive antitheses and analogies. MacLeish wants the speech to sound entirely false and unsympathetic to his own audience; it does; but he makes most of it so obviously pompous and empty that the crowd in the square could not have been fooled by it either. MacLeish, out to discredit the orator and his position, the crowd and its response, has none of the objectivity or breath of sympathy of the true dramatist, and consequently gives the orator none of the genuinely effective things he might have said. The

people are, of course, entirely won over by the speech; forgetting the Dead Woman and the Conqueror, they shout with joy, sit down and eat their lunches (wrapped in corn-shucks), play on flutes—the children and old men begin to dance. What could the Orator have said to reassure them so completely? to make them act like complacent fools?

He has made them a speech about pacifism, about passive resistance. These Aztecs, with their spears and bows, their human sacrifices, their generals in feather mantles, absolutely eat up a speech that would embarrass the most confirmed pacifist. This is false on the literal Aztec level of the play, quite as false on its allegorical topical level: when countries have been threatened by Fascist conquerors, their governments have *not* made empty pacifist appeals—it would not have worked either with their own people or with the Fascists. This minister is made a wordy demagogue, Hitler's idea of a parliamentary orator. The first half of his speech consists of inflated variations on *They that take the sword shall perish by the sword*. Then he asserts that doing nothing will conquer the conqueror; that the *snickers* of *road-menders*, the *titters* of *laundresses*, the *coarse guffaws* of *chambermaids* will make the conqueror "sweat in his uniform foolishly./He will disappear: no one hear of him!" He says that "scorn conquers," mentions reason and truth, and concludes with a thoroughly disgraceful and thoroughly unlikely peroration: "Words . . . win!"

MacLeish shows contempt for the Orator even more drastically by having the announcer, at the climax of the speech, break in with a Fitzpatrick Traveltalk description of the scene. This immense discourtesy (it would be as plausible for an announcer to interrupt one of Roosevelt's speeches with a description of Washington) shows the audience, as forcibly as a blow, that the minister is not even worth listening to; that his empty talk is less important than a travelogue's local color. And the empty romantic exoticism of the description shows the critic, just as forcibly, how completely MacLeish has managed to dodge the whole problem of

representing contemporary reality; how much he values these gaudy properties for their own sake.

The people's little fair is broken up by the arrival of the Second Messenger, as panting, exhausted, and long-winded as the first. "Stand by: we're edging in," says the announcer, reminding his hearers as sharply as possible, with the cliché, of the incongruity between the radio and this horse-less (and, presumably, signal-drum-less and signal-fire-less) culture of the Messenger. The conqueror is coming fast, warns the Messenger; "No man opposing him/Still grows his glory." It seems that the Conqueror has a straw-man, a bloody and hateful figure of horror, whom he sets up and fights with "at every road-corner"; and the alien people everywhere, overwhelmed by his prowess, bring him flowers and gold, sing songs to him, hold his hands and feel his thighs, worship him and are conquered. (This odd method of conquest is quite incomprehensible on the literal Aztec level of the play—the reader can make sense of it only if he knows that it represents the Fascist use of anti-Semitism.) This great conqueror is already crossing the mountains.

There is another complete shift in the people's behavior; "frantic with anger and plain fear," they behave like vindictive lunatics. "The mob . . . crazy with terror" is "boiling around us like mullet that smell shark." (Before they "milled like cattle.") "Down with the government!" they shout. "*Down with liberal learned minds!*" (For pure bathos, for inexcusable incongruity and anachronism, this italicized phrase is hard to beat.) Unless the people are completely inconsistent fools, sure to respond in the worst way to anything, this response to the Second Messenger—fifteen minutes after an exactly opposite response to the First Messenger—is impossible.

The priests interrupt with the second panacea, religion. They are made to seem emotional obscurantists, pure escapists; their arguments are specious and hackneyed; nevertheless, the people immediately fall for them, for the second time forgetting all about the Dead Woman and the Conqueror. The announcer, whom MacLeish makes gullible as a stage Watson, has helped

discredit the minister's speech by his vacuous acceptance of it; he receives the priests' speeches with the same enthusiasm, describing the people's response in approving clichés that would, as Wilde puts it, compromise a locomotive. The priests, with drums and songs, promptly move the people to frenzy; the crowd dances to the pyramid, tears the clothes from a girl's "bare breast," drags her to the altar, and "shrieks" (notice how the orgiastic *shrieks* influences us against the crowd) in ecstasy. All this is unlikely enough on the literal level of the play—the Aztec priests who cut the hearts from tens of thousands of prisoners are not likely to advise submission to an alien conqueror, a withdrawal from the world of action. On the topical allegorical level of the play this is senseless: no country has met a Fascist attack with hysterical religiosity—it is the last thing that would occur to anybody except a tent-show revivalist or a playwright. MacLeish makes his democracy fall because its people stupidly follow their political leaders when they counsel passive resistance; because its people stupidly follow their religious leaders when they counsel a religious withdrawal; because they stupidly and cravenly forsake their military leaders when they tell them to fight. It is hard to see how anyone could make so bad an analysis accidentally.

But now MacLeish pulls from his Sodom one lonely Lot, a brave, honest, and intelligent man of action. He is—a general! Yes, a tough old general in a feather coat. He rescues the girl, drives the people down from the pyramid, and bawls them out in the most hard-boiled and violent rhetoric the admiring MacLeish can find for him. In a deep voice that drowns the "chatter" of the crowd, he shouts: "You ought to be flogged for your foolishness!/Your grandfathers died to be free/And you—you juggle with freedom! . . . You thought you could always quibble!" And so on. Those grandfathers have a familiar ring.

The general then makes a speech about freedom (libretto by Dorothy Thompson). All he thinks about is freedom; "there's nothing in this world worse," he warns them, "than doing the Strong Man's Will." Generals are famous for feeling that way

about democracy and authority, I am told; and for trying to save the rights of the democracies from Fascism, when the people of the democracies want to throw those rights away. Certainly in MacLeish's New Found Land they're famous for it; though I'll bet that, before long, some repressed general breaks up a performance of *The Fall of the City* by establishing a military dictatorship and successfully defending the city from its conqueror.

The General makes a last appeal to the people to fight and die for their liberties: in other words, to do what the Spanish loyalists, what the Chinese, what half the nations of Europe have done and are doing. But of the people of this democracy—who allegorically stand for The People, who topically stand for the people of our own time—not one even listens to the General, not one fights for his liberty or his life. As always in this play, they scream and run around and around the square in their terror. The square is choked with *deserters*. We have been told of no troops, of no resistance; their own government has ordered them not to resist; yet MacLeish twice calls the people who flee into the square *deserters*. The citizens (who behave, from beginning to end, exactly like a mob in *Little Orphan Annie*) now give up completely, shouting the most frantic, craven, vindictive, or ridiculous sentences. "Opinions and talk! Deliberative walks beneath the ivy and the creepers!" cries one, as men mad with terror will. "He's one man: we are but thousands!" reasons another pessimistic citizen—an emigrant from *Through the Looking Glass*, no doubt. The people tear off their plumes, make bonfires of their bows, throw away their spears (Aztecs would hardly do this, modern populations would hardly have the arms to throw away); they shout wilder and wilder things: "Freedom's for fools! . . . Freedom has eaten our strength and corrupted our virtues! . . . Fools must be mastered! . . ." They end with the extraordinary, "Chains will be liberty!" The mere prospect of a Conqueror makes the people become the Conquered, servile wretches who deny all their liberties, welcome their degradation in impossible speeches.

The announcer finishes the play with a long and extremely

effective narrative. The people wait in breathless terror, minute after minute, until the Conqueror enters, helmed, mailed, "broad as a brass door: a hard hero." The people "cover their faces with their fingers. They cower before him./They fall; they sprawl on the stone." The Conqueror mounts the pyramid, opens his visor; and the announcer whispers, cries out, "There's no one!... The helmet is hollow! . . . The armor is empty . . . The push of a stiff pole at the nipple would topple it."

And the people?

They don't see or they won't see. They are silent . . .
The people invent their oppressors: they wish to believe in them.
They wish to be free of their freedom: released from their liberty—
The long labor of liberty ended!
They lie there!

Suddenly the Conqueror's arm rises, and the people "shout with happiness"; so great is their joy at being slaves, the conquered, that the announcer cries, "You'd say it was they were the conquerors." The people, "like troops in a victory," shout out exultantly: "The city of masterless men has found a master. The city has fallen." The announcer repeats, flatly: "The city has fallen." And the play ends.

The whole play has systematically discredited the people of the democracy, who are represented as stupid and treacherous cowards, without a single redeeming trait. It has discredited their leaders, who are represented as fatuous word-spinners. The people are conquered not by force, but by their own yearning to be mastered, to throw away their irksome liberties for the satisfying rule of the Strong Man. I have encountered such people before: in Hitler's and Mussolini's speeches. The only brave or intelligent man in the whole democracy is a professional soldier, a Strong Man; because of his rather implausible passion against authority and for "freedom," he does not take command of the city, but only implores the people to fight—as a result the people are conquered. (If I were a general about to set up a military

dictatorship—in order to save people from themselves, of course—I should be able to think of no other play that would so suitably influence the public and my troops.) The author's tone is: "I don't care what you want—you'll be free if I have to make you." This is the message of the play: the people are cowardly fools who *want* to be degraded, to be subjugated, to throw away their freedom—we must force them, in some way, to fight for it. The play must surely have reminded many people of Huey Long's remark that Fascism in this country will have an anti-Fascist platform. "The people invent their oppressors"! A man who has spent time interviewing those oppressors for *Fortune* should know better than that. The oppressors are real; that suit of armor was never empty: it is MacLeish who has invented, not the people. In these last years many millions of these people, over the entire world, have died fighting their oppressors. Say to them that they invented their oppressors, wished to believe in them, wished to be free of their freedom; that they lie there.

If MacLeish put his philosophy in a book, he should call it *The World as Will and Nothing But Will*. He is an extraordinary case of arrested development, a survival from an almost extinct past; there is something consciously neo-primitive about his eager adoption of the optimistic voluntarism of frontier days, when—with plenty of land, plenty of jobs, and plenty of room on top—plenty of people thought that you can if you think you can; that the world is what we make it; that there's no limit. This is as far as possible from any tragic view of life, from the point of view of any great dramatist—who is, necessarily, a specialist on limits; who knows that the world is, at a given moment, what we find it; who understands well enough to accept, with composure even, the inescapable conditions of existence. MacLeish passionately dislikes any determinism, even an optimistic one; his one response to an inescapable condition is to look strong and deny that it exists. So, in his play, it's the people's *fault*; they *choose* to be slaves; they are weak and *bad*. Burke said that you can't condemn a whole people; I'm sure MacLeish would reply, "Why not?" Why not write a play condemning them? exhort-

ing them to reform, to act just like their grandfathers, to stop quibbling about freedom and *fight*? MacLeish does not have any sort of religious or philosophical determinism, as most of the great dramatists had; the determinism of character or motivation he neglects—there is not a character in the entire play; and all the economic and social factors that may, in modern plays, furnish a kind of substitute for Fate or Necessity, he has made it his profession to avoid. So there is something curiously partial and shallow and oratorical about the play: it represents a positively political view of life.

As everybody since Aristotle has said, a play must have struggle, conflict, action—and this means more than waving weapons and making violent speeches. There is no real conflict in *The Fall of the City*. It is a play-by-play account of how an ignorant and cowardly people slide into their ruin, continually hoodwinked by everybody, until the crowning swindle is put over by an empty suit of armor. The city is not taken, it falls. (And we are convinced from the beginning, that it is going to fall; surely God—MacLeish either—doesn't raise women from the grave to tell us lies.) People talk, talk, talk, may even run around and around the square; but no one really does anything—not even the Conqueror. The General, late in the play, attempts to put some conflict into it; and is promptly disregarded. The structure of the play is extraordinarily simple, like a series of arias or recitations; it is extraordinarily unlike the complicated system of stresses and strains that is the structure of a real play.

Let me give a simplified structural analysis. The Dead Woman prophesies the fall of the city; the people become frightened. The First Messenger warns them that the Conqueror is coming; the people wait dumbly for advice. The Minister (First Orator) tells them to do nothing; they forget their fears, and dance or eat lunch. The Second Messenger warns them that the Conqueror is nearer; the people become *very* frightened. The Priests (Second Orators) tell them to be religious; they forget their fears, and dance religiously. The General (who, structurally speaking, combines the functions of Third Messenger and

Third Orator) warns them that the Conqueror is upon them, that they must fight; the people go mad with fear. The Conqueror, an empty suit of armor, marches in and raises its arm; the people don't or won't see, and shout with happiness at being conquered. I am not sure what this is the structure of; but it is certainly not the structure of a play.

The Fall of the City exists on two levels: the literal or Aztec level; the allegorical or topical level. Its action is impossible on either of these levels alone: taken as a play about a primitive people, it is absurd; taken as a play about contemporary reality, it is equally absurd. It never really joins these levels at all, but gets along by uneasily and surreptitiously shifting back and forth between the two, in an attempt to evade the difficulties that would be insurmountable if it stuck to either. MacLeish makes his easy equation between a generalized Spanish conquest of an Aztec city, a generalized Fascist conquest of a democracy, only because, as a dramatist, he has no conception of the real forces that operate in either culture: he does not bother to observe or understand how people act, why they act as they do—and so makes them do impossible things, or do possible things for impossible reasons. The one thing a dramatist *must* understand is motivation; if he does not—and MacLeish does not—his play can have only an external and arbitrary unity, the specious organization of a fallacy. The people of MacLeish's city are fantastically unlike the real Aztecs, the real population of any traditional, agricultural, non-industrialized culture. If a culture is archaic and exotic enough, he seems to think, economic and technological factors stop operating. Who are the people *with power* in this city? The elected demagogues? Apparently; but the question never occurs to him. There everything happens because of emotions, of will; it is a city of free choice. This horse-less and metal-less city, with its spears and pyramids and cloaks of feathers; the corpse rising from the grave with its prophecy; the priests with their human sacrifice; the empty and all-conquering suit of armor—are these necessary to a play about contemporary political reality, about Fascism? Obviously not.

They are gratuitous decorations, employed because they satisfy the author's taste for the romantic, the exotic, the sensational; because he believes that "verse is easily accepted on the stage only where the scene is made remote in time and so artificial to begin with"; because, after *Conquistador*, they were a familiar machinery that he had already learned to employ effectively; because they made it possible for him to distort or disregard facts, contemporary reality, and to present as real actions that would be plainly false in a contemporary scene; because his point of view is, essentially, as romanticized as his machinery of effect. His play, by accident or design, completely disregards what anyone knows: that Fascism is a highly specialized economic and political manifestation of a late stage of our own particular economic system, capitalism; that it springs from all kinds of real causes, not simply from people's cowardice and stupidity, their shameful longing to be slaves. Since he disregards all the characteristic and essential aspects of our own culture, his explanation of how Fascism operates seems not merely mistaken but childish.

The Fall of the City is false as an interpretation of reality. It is a schematized, arbitrarily one-sided, and melodramatic over-simplification, full of useless sensationalism and exoticism; a black and white political cartoon, plainly at variance with most of the facts. It is also false as an imaginative creation; the world the author creates is internally inconsistent, full of incongruities, anachronisms, arbitrary or impossible behavior; there are no characters, only the blankest of types; the motivation and organization of the play are wholly inadequate. A good deal of it, as a dramatic creation, is impossible, since it can be understood only if it is referred to some contemporary political event, accepted only if we are willing to concede, "All right, since it really happened that way." We need to suspend not only our disbelief, but our capacity for disbelieving: to open our mouths and shut our eyes and take what the mother bird gives us.

This essay is not intended to be a sympathetic or comprehensive analysis of *The Fall of the City*; I came to bury it if I could manage to. Let me admit that it is not still-born, as

most verse plays are, but has a hump and teeth. I believe that, on a fairly low level, it is an effective play; I have not tried to show why it is effective. I believe that it is a bad play; and I have tried to show why it is bad. But the point of view from which the play is written, the "message" of the play, seems to me far worse than the play itself. A critic, as critic, can say that the poet's analysis seems mistaken, his point of view unfortunate; but, speaking as a private citizen, the critic may want to be a good deal blunter. A philosopher I know once lent a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* to an old lady; when she returned it he asked, "Well, what did you think of it?" She murmured: "What a lie!"

by R. P. Blackmur

THE NOVELS OF HENRY ADAMS

ADAMS' two novels, *Democracy* and *Esther*, unlike those of a professional novelist, do not show their full significance except in connection with his life. In the case of *Democracy*, the first of the pair, the connection will be obvious when once set up, for it had to do with that part of his life which had been absorbed in the effort to make a career of politics. That is to say, it focussed, and judged, an objective ambition. With *Esther*, it is a very different matter, which it will not be easy to make clear, and upon which different opinions are possible; for in *Esther* Adams made his first attempt to express what was to most of his contemporaries an outer lack as an inner and inaccessible need. Where *Democracy* dealt with man in his relation to society in terms of existing institutions which whether they controlled or failed to control political power at least represented it, *Esther* reached out to seize, to bring to rebirth, the spiritual power which the existing church, as Adams saw it in 1883, represented only by a kind of betrayal in terms of Pilate's question. Adams was no Pilate, as who would wish to be, but he could not help asking his question in the form peculiar to his generation just as he could not help repeating it later, in his two great books, in forms which seem in their vitality to have transcended those of his generation.

Adams was a lover of Matthew Arnold's poetry, not as he loved Swinburne for intoxication and lyric escape, but because Arnold expressed for him, as the two novels show, his own dilemma. Arnold spoke for Adams more deeply than he could then speak for himself and with the blessed objectiveness of a medium alien to him, and indeed made for him a touchstone of his own fate, that fate which he felt by anticipation during the years

when he wrote his novels, and which he felt had actually overtaken him after the death of his wife in 1885. Adams was above all one of those for whom Arnold spoke in his famous lines, as

Wandering between two worlds, one dead
The other powerless to be born.

That the dead world had a singular tenacity and assiduity as a haunt and that the coming world had an overwhelming, if uncertain, necessity as a conception, made the distress of such an image the more severe. If a man cannot act upon his dilemma, or escape it in blind action, he will sometimes attempt to make symbols or fables of what would otherwise drive him to action; and it is as such symbols, such fables, that Adams' two novels best clarify themselves. It is I think to a considerable extent how he meant them, and it is certainly how we may best use them for ourselves. They show what were to become twenty years later his major themes slowly, rather lamely, and with many concessions of a superfluous sort to the "exigences" of the popular novel, taking their first imaginative form, the one as judgment and the other as the beginning of prophecy. It is only by accident that we see them as novels at all.

Perhaps a man wandering between two worlds could not be expected to show much competence as a novelist, for if one thing is certain it is that the novel in the nineteenth century had to pay maximum attention either to one world or another and usually had to pay attention in terms of a story with either a satisfactory or a desirable ending. Adams did no such thing. He borrowed what he wished from the outsides of the popular novels of his day, and not from the best popular novels either or the newest, but from Lytton and Disraeli, from a romancer and a fabulist. His practical conception of what a novelist could do with difficult or interesting or obsessive material (and his material *did* obsess him) was not keen; and he lacked the native gift of the story-teller and the native necessity of the imagination that is able to create character. Thus he mixed in random proportions a love story, social comedy, social satire, and, for *Democracy*, the drama of

politics or, for *Esther*, the drama of faith; and among these elements he set his chosen puppets to play and be played upon through arbitrary actions and dialogue either rootlessly brilliant or desperately conventional. Only when the author's intellect takes hold, do the scenes come alive in the sense that the reader participates in them, and what the author's intellect takes hold of was what he knew when he began to write and not what the process of writing—of dramatising—discovered for him. In short, if the novels were not by Henry Adams they would hardly be read today except to satisfy an omnivorous taste in the detritus of the third quarter of nineteenth century American fiction.

But they were by Adams; and that fact provides us with enough good will so that we can take them, not as the third-rate novels they seem, but with the maximum significance that can be extracted from them in terms of Adams' life and work. To examine the stages by which an idea or an image or a major attitude gained its final expression is often to get rid of the idea, image, or attitude in an orderly rubbish pile, but it may sometimes be, altogether to the contrary, the most actual and the most dramatic means possible of understanding them. The idea or attitude in *Democracy* became in *The Education of Henry Adams* the idea or attitude by which Adams envisaged intelligence as playing the supreme rôle in American political life, but in the novel *Democracy* that same intelligence is shown as defeated by the very inertia which Adams later showed as its source. In *Democracy* American politics is shown as failing by the accident of corruption, as it were by the inattentiveness of human intelligence. In the *Education*, political life is shown, not as failing but as in abeyance; and the question is put: whether human intelligence is, or is not, adequate to controlling the vast forces which had shaped its forms. The difference is between the mere corruption of public life and the question whether public life will, or will not, cohere.

The two problems are of course the same in the sense that the second is the deeper expression of the first. Corruption in public life comes about through a misuse of the intelligence, and political intelligence becomes adequate when, other things being

equal, it is able to control its evident misuses. The labour of the man who exposes political corruption must always be first of all to expose it as wastefully unintelligent, and secondly to drive from power those who have given in to the easier forms of corruption. It is only the third and distant step that can envisage the application of active intelligence to an actual situation. The first labours are of debate, and the last is of imagination. Adams, writing *Democracy* in the winter of 1878-79, worked still in the toils of debate, but the beginning of imagination was in sight, or he would have tried his purpose in some other form than that of the novel: say the essay, the pamphlet, the broadside, forms of which indeed his novel provides running examples.

For his purpose was direct and immediate as well as remote and conceptual. A man knowing himself of great potential parts he had reached that time of life when he realised that his early force was spent and knew that he could no longer regard all things as possible. But he had not yet discovered what was possible. There was a tension in him on the surface level as well as at the deep level. Active politics still pulled in him, had pulled him to Washington from Harvard, and pulled at least as hard as history; but at the same time it pulled, it repelled. As Henry James said of him as of that time, though he was not in politics, politics was much in him. The corrupt theft of the election of 1876 could not be accepted in despair but in hope, and the hope must still be in the establishment of an independent party of the centre—the project which he had worked, with his friends, so hard upon for nearly ten years. The chief obstacles to such a party remained the party caucus, the party central committee, and the system of party spoils—all calculated to pervert public responsibility to one form or another of party irresponsibility, and all certain to transform the duty or ambition of power into a lust for power which could be gratified only in individuals, never in policies. And all the life of party lay concentrated, for Adams, in the single figure of James G. Blaine, who had twice prevented the nomination of his father, and who had only just escaped the nomination himself by a political trick of his enemies.

Blaine was clearly the most powerful man in the Republican party and was the almost certain nominee for 1880. The tarnish of his corruption had somehow made his star shine more brightly. It must be made to fall. *Democracy* had as its immediate object to strike Blaine a mortal blow to which he could not retaliate; and if Blaine fell, it might signal the fall of the caucus system itself. The prospect was not good, so poor indeed that Blaine had to be turned into an ogre powerful in evil instead of a mere man intolerably weak at the centre. As history would eventually judge, so art might immediately clarify the extremes. There must be an angel to contend with the ogre.

The frame Adams set up for the struggle was as simple and conventional as *Pilgrim's Progress*. Madeleine Lee, a widow of thirty with twenty-odd thousand a year, attractive, intelligent, well-connected, but with a degree of naivety, comes to Washington with her younger sister Sybil, because she is bored with New York and Boston and social Europe. She wants to see how the country is run, and not only to feel its pulse, but to sit in the seat of power. Her interest, as Adams tells us, was in POWER spelt big, but it focussed rather more upon the engineer than upon the force that drove the engine. In Washington she forms a relationship with her cousin Senator Clinton of New York, who represents the height of senatorial purity, and with Guy Carrington, a distant connection of her dead husband, a Virginian who had been by accident a rebel soldier, and now struggled with genuine honesty to make his living as a lawyer without office in Washington. Carrington falls deeply but ineffectually in love with her. He is, however, successful as her courier, running errands, bringing friends, taking her about as guide and instructor, and altogether furnishing her with the groundwork for an independent point of view. Senator Clinton serves to introduce her to official life. Between them she very shortly knows all Washington; she is a welcome guest and a sought-for hostess. Almost at once, she singles out Senator Ratcliffe of Illinois, and quite rightly, as the central agent of power, and when she meets him, she at once snares him for her own, quite without thinking, by compar-

ing the speech she has just heard him deliver to Webster at his best. Ratcliffe, for his part, sets himself to catch her. From then on, Ratcliffe's shadow lies over the book, blotting out light after light.

But the other lights are necessary, and must be estimated, if the obliterative strength of the shadow is to be understood. There is Mr. Gore, the literary man and historian from Massachusetts, who vainly hopes for a foreign ministry to close his career, and who is presented to us as the man of integrity vitiated, like Sumner, by his egoism. There is French from Connecticut, the vulgar, conceited, but well intentioned reformer: he is honesty shown as ineffectual because he does not understand the powers with which he must deal. There is Schneidekoupon, the protectionist coupon-clipper, who is rather more successful than French because he not only understands the men with whom he must deal but also has a community of interest with them. There is Lord Skye, the British Minister, who shows the foil of disinterested but sympathetic candour. Rather different, there is Baron Jacobi, who is Minister from Bulgaria, with no purpose in Washington but to drive barbs into the hide of American complacency and hypocrisy. Besides these official lights, there is also a small gallery of figures introduced either for social illumination or to promote the mechanical motion of the plot. There is Lord Dunbeg, the Irish peer, who furnishes the love-interest on a low scale, and who is coupled with Victoria Dare, a young lady of great pertness, a gift for stuttering at opportune moments, and a fortune which she is willing to exchange for a coronet. There is Sybil Ross, who is sometimes coupled with Count Popoff, an attaché to a legation, and sometimes used as a foil with Carrington. Lastly, there is a Mrs. Baker, blonde and vulgar, the widow of Sam Baker the lobbyist, and it is through her that evidence of Ratcliffe's corruption is secured. Minor characters in addition are introduced as occasion offers, and dismissed when done with.

But there are lights which are not so much characters as they are scenes: incidents in Madeleine Lee's telescoped education. The story opens not long before the inauguration of the new

president, the unknown "Stone-cutter from the Wabash," and Madeleine is sent to the outgoing president's first formal reception of the season at the White House, where she is shocked with horror and sees the futility of political ambition when she found herself "before two seemingly mechanical figures, which might be of wood or wax, for any sign they showed of life. These two figures were the President and his wife; they stood stiff and awkward by the door, both their faces stripped of every sign of intelligence, while the right hands of both extended themselves to the column of visitors with the mechanical action of toy dolls. Mrs. Lee for a moment began to laugh, but the laugh died on her lips. To the President and his wife this was clearly no laughing matter. There they stood, automata, representatives of the society which streamed past them." Afterwards she falls into conversation with Lord Skye, who will not answer her when she asks why he looks so melancholy, but coolly looks round the room then back into her face. But Madeleine insisted.

"I must have this riddle answered. It suffocates me. I should not be sad at seeing these same people at work or at play, if they ever do play; or in a church or a lecture-room. Why do they weigh on me like a horrid phantom here?"

"I see no riddle, Mrs. Lee. You have answered your own question; they are neither at work nor at play."

What Lord Skye hinted at, and what Madeleine half saw, was that dead drive, that undercurrent of energy in the American people, which refuses to assert itself in intelligent or intelligible form, and which therefore can be employed by the first hand clever enough or greedy enough to seize it. If the President and his wife were automata, no doubt there was some hidden crew who pulled the strings that made them move. That was the image, and such was the suggestion, that should have printed itself on Madeleine's mind. But her naivety had not yet affixed to itself a principle of illumination; for as Henry James said, the value of naivety is like that of zero, it depends on what figure you attach to it, and Madeleine had none.

In another scene, however, the integer began to appear and the

value to become prospectively certain. On a balmy day in late February, very nearly the whole cast of characters venture down the river to Mt. Vernon. There is a good deal of talk about the character and achievement of George Washington, with each man giving his characteristic view. Mr. Gore sees him in history, Senator Ratcliffe vulgarises him, and Carrington humanises him. To Madeleine, with the Capitol fresh at her back and the White House in her eye, it seemed that the first President turned in his sleep. She "insisted that the tomb, as it stood, was the only restless spot about the quiet landscape, and that it contradicted all her ideas about repose in the grave." And when the party steamed away, she began to wonder whether she had not become tainted with the life about her. "Why was it, she said bitterly to herself, that everything Washington touched, he purified, even down to the associations of his house? and why is it that everything we touch seems soiled? Why do I feel unclean when I look at Mount Vernon? In spite of Mr. Ratcliffe, is it not better to be a child and to cry for the moon and stars?"

What these scenes, and others like them, have as their function is to prepare Madeleine, by setting up values symbolically, which at last she will be able to articulate dramatically. They put something at her back upon which, if she does not consider them herself, the reader can meditate for her, and perhaps apply to the actually meagre words that she finally uses to rid herself of the political scene forever. Indeed, had the book been composed of such scenes alone, it might have done as a Mystery play about the political Tree of Knowledge in 1879, and so been a pure enacted fable. But Adams had not that talent, not till long afterwards when he recounted the affair of the Virgin and the Dynamo or made a second-telling of the affair of Héloïse and Abelard. He rather chose to set his scenes in a frame of action half that of a Grimm fairy-tale and half that of an Oscar Wilde Comedy.

As Madeleine begins visibly to associate herself with Senator Ratcliffe, others of her friends, especially Carrington and Baron Jacobi, begin to work against the Senator, partly because they like Madeleine but as much more out of their accumulated animus

against Ratcliffe. Madeleine of course resists; the temptation of power is greater than the scruple of conscience, and she even accepts Ratcliffe's own account of how he held back the ballots of the northern counties of his state till he found how many were needed to save the election for the Party; she accepts it as a patriotic necessity, to be forgiven as murder is in a soldier. Ratcliffe manoeuvres himself into the new Cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. Gradually it seems to her friends that she is lost to the secretary, and Carrington resolves to betray a secret about Ratcliffe which he has learned in his professional capacity as executor of Samuel Baker the lobbyist. He therefore prepares a letter describing how Ratcliffe had accepted a hundred thousand dollars from a steamship company to ensure the passage of a bill subsidizing the company. Ratcliffe has suspected something of the sort and attempts to buy him off with the job of Solicitor to the Treasury Department, which he offers through Madeleine. Carrington refuses. Ratcliffe gets round him, however, by having the State Department offer him a job as Claims Agent in Mexico, and Carrington, unsuspecting of its origin, accepts. Before leaving he makes a bid for Madeleine's hand, and failing that leaves his letter establishing Ratcliffe's corruption in the hands of Madeleine's sister Sibyl with instructions that she give it to Madeleine only if it should seem likely that she was about to become engaged to Ratcliffe. Sibyl agrees, and after seeing her sister and the Secretary of the Treasury in close and eloquent conversation at a great ball, taxes her with the question. Madeleine says she has not answered Ratcliffe but intends to in the affirmative. Then Madeleine is given the letter; she reads it, clears the house for action, and awaits her suitor with an as yet unclarified negative stout in her mind. The ensuing interview ends the books, and we shall see in a moment in what terms it reached conclusion.

But it would be unfair to the terms and would vitiate the conclusion if we did not first weigh for ourselves some of the preliminary matters which Adams has exhibited for us as pressing upon his young heroine—his woman almost of the world—to give her declarative energy. All the shallowness, weakness, and igno-

rance which Baron Jacobi had underlined and the others had marked with their various verbal weapons must then have risen in memory to help her, just as she must have refreshed herself with whatever traces remained in her mind of the single image she had herself made, not then for Ratcliffe but which now fitted him as if by design. It had been after she had reflected upon the conversation of certain unnamed "intelligent" Congressmen whom French, the Connecticut reformer, had brought to her house. "Underneath the scum floating on the surface of politics, Madeleine felt that there was a sort of healthy ocean current of honest purpose, which swept the scum before it, and kept the mass pure." Then she had employed her image to reconcile her to the Ratcliffian morals; he represented for her a kind of necessary double standard of morality, and she could not bring herself to stand in judgment. She had thought of him as helping, by whatever means, as foul as necessary, to sweep the scum away; now she perhaps could not help seeing him as the scum to be himself swept away, for he seemed as rotten inside as the material he handled. There was now too a truth of plain actuality rather than the flash of ungrateful wit in the attribution to Ratcliffe, which she must have heard though she might have forgotten it, of the following sentiment as the basis for his manipulation of the new President. "The issue now involved was not one of principle but of power. The fate of that noble party to which they all belonged, and which had a record that could never be forgotten, depended on their letting principle alone. Their principle must be the want of principle." She saw now clearly as she only thought she saw then how idle had been her adjuration to him to act for the public good. There was no public good at all in "this maze of personal intrigue, this wilderness of stunted natures where no straight road was to be found, but only the tortuous and aimless tracks of beasts and things that crawl." She saw now how he had played on her, when then she thought he had pled for her help; for, as her author had observed, "he had divined her character and read it as he read the faces and tones of thousands from day to day." Again, there was the observation that "Rat-

cliffe, too, had a curious instinct for human weaknesses. No magnetic needle was ever truer than his finger when he touched the vulnerable spot in an opponent's mind." This was when Ratcliffe had begun appealing, not to her ambition or her affection, but to her duty, to her sense of abnegation. The power in him, which showed as the eloquence of an actor, must now seem what it ought to have seemed then, the power to corrupt goodness in others by obviating it in the self. Whether she recast her unconscious experience after this fashion or not—and a better novelist would have shown how she did—surely she could not now fail to remember the words which Mr. Gore of Massachusetts had spoken so earnestly to her in her own drawing-room under the charge of secrecy, after she had asked him point-blank what he himself believed in. He had with some preamble replied, and it may be observed that his language was Adams' as well as his own.

"I believe in democracy," he said. "I accept it. I will faithfully serve and defend it. I believe in it because it appears to me the inevitable consequence of what has gone before it. Democracy asserts the fact that the masses are now raised to a higher intelligence than formerly. All our civilization aims at this mark. We want to do what we can to help it. I myself want to see the result. I grant it is an experiment, but it is the only direction society can take that is worth its taking; the only conception of its duty large enough to satisfy its instincts; the only result that is worth an effort or a risk. Every other possible step is backward, and I do not care to repeat the past. I am glad to see society grapple with issues in which no one can afford to be neutral."

When Mrs. Lee asks him what if the experiment should fail, he suggests she visit the observatory and watch a fixed star burning up; but that was a gesture with a meaning, if at all, beyond words, and neither of them took it very seriously. No one ever takes the idea of a really fundamental change seriously, least of all in themselves, and if change does occur that cannot be ignored, they quote the French proverb and insist that it is all the same

thing; and perhaps that is why we can now look at the last scene in Adams' novel of the corrupt politics of the seventies and see in it a fable for our own time.

When the Secretary of the Treasury came in to learn his fate in a Sunday call, Madeleine came up at once with a clear refusal, which she made, she thought, with the sole object of protecting herself. Her mistake was in not realising that she had already surrendered a part of herself to him, so that she had not only to protect but also in a degree to save herself. In the degree lay the meaning of the fable. When he rejects her refusal and asks her reasons, she says merely that they lead divergent lives. "Show me," says he, "a single example of such divergence, and I will accept your decision without another word." At that she shows him Carrington's letter retailing the \$100,000 bribe. He reads it and attempts to explain it away by first admitting its substantial truth and then arguing that he had got no personal benefit from the money, but that he had done it all for the sake of the Party. To this she answered nothing, but "she felt as though she had got to the heart of politics, so that she could, like a physician with his stethoscope, measure the organic disease. Now at last she knew why the pulse beat with such unhealthy irregularity, and why men felt an anxiety which they could not or would not explain." She was sure "that his courage was mere moral paralysis, and that he talked about virtue and vice as a man who is colour-blind talks about red and green; he did not see them as she saw them; if left to choose for himself he would have nothing to guide him." That is why he had the strength to continue his argument with a sincere sense of the justice of his cause, and that is why too, the more eloquently and justly he pled the more she had to repel him. So long as he could see no divergence between them, so long as he saw their apparent differences as mere matters of accidental and superficial necessity, the more intolerable his declared identity of purpose. If he could say, as he did with every evidence of sincerity, that he wanted what she wanted, and half a minute later say with equal vehemence that if there were many people who persisted in her opinion there would be no government of

the United States, then he was right in telling her that "she led a mere death in life" and resembled a saint on a solitary column, and there was nothing more she could say except the repetition of a blander refusal. The Secretary then tries the new tack of offering to give up politics, but that was to pass the time. She, however, takes him seriously and says that she is not to be bought, to which he responds in fury that, as Mrs. Clinton had told him, she is a heartless coquette.

"'A heartless coquette!' he repeated, still more harshly than before; 'she said you would do just this! that you meant to deceive me! that you lived on flattery! that you could never be anything but a coquette, and that if you married me, I should repent it all my life. I believe her now!'"

There was then of course nothing for Madeleine to do but to remind him that he should be in a State prison. "Understand, once for all, that there is an impassable gulf between your life and mine. I do not doubt that you will make yourself President, but whatever or wherever you are, never speak to me or recognise me again!"

These are the last sentiments the Secretary and the lady exchanged; and it may be wondered whether Adams realized to what degree the balance of truth fell to the Secretary's side of the fulcrum rather than to the lady's. Madeleine herself perhaps realized it, for her last words in the book were that she would like to "live in the Great Pyramid and look out for ever at the polar star!" When the intelligence plays the coquette with corruption she is as sullied in her person as is the woman in whose guise she plays it. But what if there is no rôle for the intelligence to play in corrupt politics but that of coquette? How shall it be then? Shall she play no rôle at all?

Adams, hovering between his two worlds, had as yet no clear answer, no answer that he could stick to, nor have the liberals today. Pure intelligence still coquettes with the corruption which it fears, is still unwilling to cleanse necessity by performing it, but asks corruption rather to reform itself first, and then flees to its great pyramid and its pole star when corruption refuses the

wooden nutmeg of reform. No wonder the *Nation's* review of *Democracy* complained that the tale was too simplified and the characters too composite, on the one hand of evil and on the other of good, to be either representative or probable. The *Nation* had a stake in success at the polls, and at the moment when Adams wrote his book, he had begun to feel that he had no stake in the present and had not yet envisaged his stake in the future. He was not yet himself; and that, rather than the fear that his portraits might be recognised—for they *were* recognised, regardless—was the reason for his anonymity. So with Madeleine in her flight, for flight from the problems of the intelligence represents the desire of anonymity in the sense that it anticipates the refuge of lesser identity. That is the lesson of the fable of *Democracy*—perhaps in the way of life as well as the novel: it shows the intelligence which is willing to tamper with the actual without being willing to seize it, as properly humiliated and sent flying. If the failure of Madeleine lay deeper than that, it was perhaps that she never understood the principle that the intelligence must always act as if it were adequate to the problems it has aroused. That is, it must see the evils it attacks as the vivid forms of its own abused and debased self. Otherwise, it must give up.

But not to give up requires exactly a treasure in the self which Adams felt as deeply lacking. The intelligence, as he was fond of saying later in life, the intelligence is not enough; only faith goes beyond. Faith, in the 80's, came so cheap that for costly souls it was often not to be had. A long procession of men and their ideas—Darwin, Lyell, Maxwell, Huxley, Comte, Marx, and Herbert Spencer—had combined to remove Christian faith as a simple birthright and seemed to have substituted for it only a progressively expanding area of doubt as to even the provisional validity of any evolutionary faith unless you defined the fit as those who survive. Both what was roughly called "scientific" faith and Christian faith had come in one sense into a sort of precarious balance. Each had to be fought for, and constantly reestablished, by the individual, unless you were willing to give up

all the scruples of thought and procedure which had started the fight. Each presented a mystery. The Christian faith presented its mystery beforehand as the source of faith and ended with a mystery as well; the scientific faith ended in a mystery for which it seemed to have no foundation. The one was arrogant about its facts and the other was arrogant about its traditional source; neither could afford to be arrogant about its future, unless hope could be called arrogant. If you hung between the two positions, as intelligent people mostly did, the problem was the more painful in proportion to your intelligence, or to your responsiveness, intelligent or not. Only the poor were supposed to have solved the problem, for the intelligent supposed the poor to be stupid, and therefore had need of religion, though the fact was that the poor were not stupid but plentiful and therefore had greater need of religion; their facts they had for the asking. At any rate the intelligent man who tried to make his faith his own found himself in the desperate position of having to give up, at the critical moment, and no matter which faith he chose, intelligence itself. That perhaps was because, in that energetic age, he mistook faith for a superior form of energy, like coal-power or water-power or atomic power, rather than for a primitive—or fundamental—form of insight. The poor fellow wanted to transcend himself by calling upon a higher energy, when he ought rather to have tried to discover the faith of what he actually was. It was natural, therefore, that the dichotomy of religion and science should become artificially sharp, that the arrogance of doubt should set itself against the arrogance of dogma; the problem over which they fought was itself artificial and engaged greatly only the weakness of either side, hardly ever calling on either's strength.

Yet faith, whatever it was, and however misconceived, was what kept you going. What then was an intelligent person, exposed to both sides, to do? That was the question which Adams proposed to clarify in his fable called *Esther*.

How deeply he later regarded the book is seen in the two references to it in his published letters. To John Hay he wrote,

23 August 1886, from Japan, thanking him for his high opinion of it. "Now let it die! To admit the public to it would be almost unendurable to me. I will not pretend that the book is not precious to me, but its value has nothing to do with the public who could never understand that such a book might be written in one's heart's blood." To Elizabeth Cameron he wrote 13 February 1891, from Papeete, with reference to his history then just wholly published. "It belongs to the *me* of 1870; a strangely different being from the *me* of 1890. There are not nine pages in the nine volumes that now express anything of my interests or my feelings; unless perhaps some of my disillusionments. So you must not blame me if I feel, or seem to feel, morbid on the subject of the history. I care more for one chapter, or any dozen pages of *Esther*, than for the whole history, including maps and indexes; so much more, indeed, that I would not let anyone read the story for fear the reader should profane it."

These sentences may make a mystery of what should be plain; perhaps Adams' distressed regard for the book was due to the change that had come over him since his wife's death in 1885, over a year after its publication, so that the book seemed to him a kind of posthumously reared symbol, like the monument at Rock Creek, for what their marriage had meant to him. Yet the publication itself had been made in curious circumstances. It was published not only anonymously, which might have attracted attention, but under a pseudonym, Frances Snow Compton. By Adams' instruction it was not advertised and was not offered for review. Search of the press shows only a single notice of it, and only some five hundred and twenty-seven copies seem to have been sold in America, with a few more in England. Henry Holt stated late in life that Adams had told him he wanted to see what the book would do on its own merits without promotion of any sort, and that it was to be published at his own risk. Rather than an act of publication, these circumstances seem to suggest an act of exorcism or objective suppression, as if Adams could not get rid of an inner burden except by printing it up and throw-

ing it away, as one drives a pin into the wax image of the person whom one wishes to destroy.

A simpler explanation is that Adams had modelled Esther Dudley in the book after his own wife, and rather more closely than he had modelled the other characters after his friends LaFarge and King, with perhaps a trace of himself in the character modelled after King. Certainly Adams' inability to create independent characters, and his regular tendency to copy his friends as though they were types, suggests that the unique freshness, warmth, and affection with which Esther is modelled, and his concentration upon her sensibility rather than upon her intellect as the measure of her growth and response, could not have been an exception, but rather represented the result of his cultivated and endeared meditation upon the image of Marian Adams. If the figure of Ratcliffe in *Democracy* represents a combination in excess of the features of Blaine, perhaps the figure of Esther represents a combination in imaginative penetration upon the features of his wife, as if he wished to bridge that loneliness that lies only between the most intimately connected people. As Robert Spiller points out in his Introduction to the facsimile reprint of *Esther*, Esther Dudley is the first intimation of the woman all sensibility and imagination whom Adams symbolically enthroned in the heart of the medieval church, and whose energy, the double energy of sex and faith, he heard transformed in the Hall of Dynamos at the Paris Exposition of 1900. If that is so, then Adams wrote his Esther twice over in heart's blood, once from the heart of his love for his wife and again in the heart of the imagination which he created.

But the figure of Esther Dudley drew significance from another source as well, from the symbolism of Hawthorne's story of that name. Adams supplies the clue when he has one of his characters refer to the identity of name. Let us then rehearse Hawthorne's fable before seeing what Adams did with his version of it. It is the fourth of the *Legends of the Province House* and recounts how when the last royal governor of Massachusetts fled before the revolutionaries, and aged lady named Esther Dudley,

who had been for many years attached to the House, insisted on remaining until, as she firmly expected, the next royal governor came. Meanwhile she would keep the house protected and would hold the great key of entry. As time passes and no governor appears she preserves what of the old ritual she can, placing lights in the windows on the King's birthday, giving gingerbread wafers with the royal crown stamped on them to the children, and calling up for herself and the children images of the departed worthies of the province. Thus she served, and maintained in hallucinated being, the full symbols of the old order which had else departed the Boston community. The people accepted her as a survival. When she celebrated the King's birthday they 'laughed aloud, and would have thrown mud against the blazing transparency of the King's crown and initials, only that they pitied the poor old dame, who was so dismally triumphant amid the wreck and ruin of the system to which she appertained.' At last, with the wars over, Governor Hancock appears and old Esther Dudley, mistaking him for a royal governor, meets him at the entrance with her saved key. When she realises her mistake she asks death to come quickly, for she has herself let in a traitor. Governor Hancock does his best to soothe her in a formal address, reminding her that the day of her faith has long been done, and that there is a new race and a new faith come to take her place. "Ceasing to model ourselves on ancestral superstitions," he concludes, "it is our faith and principle to press onward, onward! Yet," continued he, turning to his attendants, "let us reverence, for the last time, the stately and gorgeous prejudices of the tottering Past!"

It will be observed how easily Hawthorne's language transposes itself to the terms of a religious rather than a social faith, and indeed, till the nineteenth century, the two forms of faith had commonly been fused, and seldom did either exist independent of the other, but rather—to use John Donne's word—interinimated each other to make a common life. So, if Hawthorne's words be read in a chosen light, the two faiths, in the royal order and in the Christian order, disappeared from Province Court at

about the same time. Never afterward did the authority of God show more than the authority of the King over the people of Boston; and the symbols that remained of both were hardly understood by those who used them, and if used, were used as branches of police power rather than as the substances of insight.

As, in a way, Adams showed us in *Democracy* a state where the only responsible power was the police power and other powers were held irresponsibly, so, in *Esther*, he shows us a religion where the only effective power wielded by the church was also a kind of police power, and the great problems of faith were either received in indifference or were left to those outside the congregation. He shows us the figure of Hawthorne's Esther Dudley, with a difference. She does not hold the faith in an alien world, but she waits in an indifferent world for someone to bring the faith to her. Her struggle, then, is not to reject the false comer, but to see if she can accept him when he comes, in the form, as it happens, of the new rector of the new Episcopal Church of St. John on Fifth Avenue. Esther Dudley is a young woman with a high taste in art and a high achievement in humanity, serious, with a conscience, an intelligence, and an infinitely malleable sensibility; she needs only a mastering faith to generate conviction and strength. She is first presented to us in the company of Professor George Strong at the first service to be held in the as yet unfinished church by the new rector, Stephen Hazard, an old classmate at Harvard of Strong's. The congregation is fashionable to an extreme, and to Esther there is no sense of spirituality or religion either in the new church or its worshippers. Hazard, when he mounts the pulpit, strikes her as all eyes and all arrogance, for he has one of those faces which at a distance show nothing but eyes, and his text was, "He that hath ears, let him hear," which involves the notion of mastery in the priest who speaks. She is therefore both repelled and a little disturbed; annoyed at the fashion and the dumb show, and innerly eager to hear.

As the story goes, she hears, but it is not the right word, and she continues to be repelled after having made a profound and

exhausting effort to submit. Hazard, of course, falls in love with her, so that her conversion, if it took place, would amount to a marriage to the church itself, which is bad theology but in this case a sound trope. It is not only the question of her love for the man Hazard, but the much more difficult question whether she can create for herself a sense of profession within the spiritual edifice of the church.

Other influences are of course brought to play upon her. There is her father, William Dudley, who is enough of an agnostic to have, on the one hand a family pew, and on the other hand to distrust the church on earth as much he distrusts kingdom come. There are her aunt and uncle Sarah and John Murray. John Murray is on the type of Mr. Dudley, and his wife Sarah characterizes the police-power influence in the church; she sees that things are run in an orderly fashion, takes her religion with her ancestry, and contrives to make it as fashionable and as sensible as her address. Then there is George Strong the geologist, who believes in science, and who holds Esther up to his old friend Hazard as having nothing medieval about her. "If she belongs to any beside the present, it is to the next world which artists want to see, when paganism will come again and we can give a divinity to every waterfall." To complete the quadrangle of influence there is Wharton, the artist, who was evidently modelled on Adams' close friend John LaFarge, and of whom Adams wrote in the *Education*: "One was never quite sure of his whole meaning until too late to respond, for he had no difficulty in carrying different shades of contradiction in his mind. As he said of his friend Okakura, his thought ran as a stream runs through grass, hidden perhaps but always there." In *Esther*, it is as a complete being rather than as a mind that Wharton serves best as a foil, for the others, with one exception, work upon the young woman's mind as fragmentary beings. The exception is Catharine Brooke, the fresh fledging from the West, called the Sage Hen by her friends; the spirit of the wide places, the earth goddess of the mountains and prairies from which she came, all problems to her are but artificial forms of the simple problem of assent. She can

assent to anything that strikes her as having meaning or character, without trouble of will or stress of spirit, for to her things are their own meaning, and you only deprive them of meaning by thinking about them.

All of these characters work against the interests of Hazard in their different ways, not because they particularly wish to but because each has his own characteristic inability to accept what Hazard stands for. Here again, Catharine Brooke is an apparent exception, for she is as willing to accept him as any other natural phenomenon. But that, to Hazard, is fatal, for to him the act of choice is a matter of infinite importance, leading either to damnation or salvation. You are powerless if you choose against him, for all energies, to his mind, belong to the Church; and if you choose for him, you have given yourself up, and what energy you thought was yours will be devoured by the Church. To be saved, in his rule, was altogether to be absorbed.

The events which serve to frame out the theme are even simpler than those in *Democracy*. There is a church service or two, a tea party or two, an evening or two, and conversations on the scaffold in the church where both Esther and Catharine are employed to help Wharton paint saints on the walls; there is the death-bed of Mr. Dudley; and three longish interviews between Hazard and Esther, the last of which takes place at Niagara Falls where Esther has flown to escape what has become the importunity and intolerableness of his love. There is no intrigue, except the quite adventitious affair of the return of Wharton's dissolute bohemian wife, which mars the unity of the book. It is in the serious talk that everything takes place, or is felt to have been touched on, adumbrated, or invoked.

Running through the midmost part of many of these conversations there is the image of Petrarch and his unlucky love of Laura and how Petrarch made his ill luck in love stand him in so great stead that he saw God. All three men, each in his way, are obsessed with Petrarch, Wharton because he had had such an unlucky love himself; Hazard because he was doomed to have such a love—only it was God who deprived him of his love rather than

his love that led him to God; and Strong because he was doomed to have neither love nor sight of God; and all three managed to transfer something of their obsessions to Catharine and Esther. Catharine, as usual, assented to Petrarch as one more possibility; Esther made a new version, a new obsession, for herself by adding her own sense to that of the other three. She became both Esther and Laura; as if Adams had resurrected her so that she might play Laura's rôle, the forlorn and devastated rôle of the woman who has been impossibly loved.

For Petrarch, as Stephen Hazard was fond of remarking, had put Laura on the same footing as his deity, and when he had lost her he groaned over the time thrown away on her. The lines most repeated are those Adams translates for Hazard's mouth to speak:

As sight of God is the eternal life,
No more we ask, nor more to wish we dare,
but which return to the Italian in Esther's repetition,

Siccome eterna vita è veder dio,
Nè più si brama, nè bramar piu lice.

She murmured them often to herself while working in the church, "and at such moments," Adams goes on, Hazard "began to think that he was himself Petrarch, and that to repeat to his Laura the next two verses had become the destiny of his life." But it was not, as Petrarch himself would have had the circle completed, until Hazard was about to lose Esther forever that he was able to make his repetition aloud, when, as he said, he felt for the first time their beauty:

So, lady, sight of you, in my despair,
Brings paradise to this brief life and frail.

Esther tells him to hush! there is nothing but friendship left for them. But Stephen Hazard, as his name would suggest—for Stephen was the first martyr; and there was a divine hazard which it was needful for a martyr to take—could not stop there any more than Petrarch. It is the last scene in the book. Hazard has

pursued her in order to make his final plea for her love within sound and sight of Niagara Falls to which she has fled because she has finally made up her mind that she cannot accept both him and his church. His arguments are as good as such arguments can be, that atheism and religion are two forms of ignorance, the only difference being that his ignorance is joined with a faith and a hope. He reminds her that Strong the scientist as well as himself "must at last trust in some mysterious and humanly incomprehensible form of words." Esther could make no answer, she is able only to receive, to feel, and to re-create impressions. "She sat for some moments silent," Adams writes, "while he gazed into her face, and her eyes wandered out to the gloomy and cloud-covered cataract. She felt herself being swept over it. Which-ever way she moved, she had to look down into an abyss, and leap." Hazard drives her, and himself, further; he admits that the tyranny of his church is his own tyranny, and that at last wrings a pure cry from Esther: Be generous! "It is not my fault if you and your profession are one; and of all things on earth, to be half-married must be the worst torture."

In that cry I think was some of Adams' heart's blood; but there was more to come. Hazard goes on, risking everything by holding back nothing, and Esther goes on, for her part, holding back nothing of her disappointment and distrust and contempt for the worldliness of his church. Hazard's last plea, no less honest than his first, was fatal: he appealed to the "natural instincts of her sex," and to that Esther let go her second and last cry, to which there was no answer, since there was as yet in Adams no further imagination of energy whether of sex or of faith. Yet in giving Esther the words he did, he showed the fatal drained weakness in his own position.

"Why must the church always appeal to my weakness and never to my strength! I ask for spiritual life and you send me back to my flesh and blood as though I were a tigress you were sending back to her cubs."

Esther Dudley felt that for herself she had lost the romance in her life; she had played Laura to the full; but she had also

played her ancestral part and had given up the key that would open no gate. Like Madeleine in *Democracy* she had been unable to use the strength within her and so had fled; and like Madeleine, too, she had been partly wrong in not realising where her strength lay, just as Hazard was unaware of where the weakness in his position was. Yet it hovered; what was powerless to be born was nevertheless about to be delivered, precisely as it had never been dead, except in men's eyes. Sex was the energy that moved them both, and faith, if it had existed, would have clarified the energy. Twenty years later, Adams showed that he knew it, but in the 1880's it was the failure to realise his knowledge that spilled his heart's blood.

Neither of Adams' novels reached conclusions; they were rather fables of the inconclusive; complementary to each other, they represented the gropings of a maturing mind after its final theme. Taken together they make the turning-point of a mind which had constructed itself primarily for a life of political action into a new life which should be predominantly imaginative and prophetic. But the turning had not finally been made. Adams lived still between two worlds.

by Harry M. Campbell

EXPERIMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

AS I LAY DYING AND THE SOUND AND THE FURY

THE works of William Faulkner have already had a considerable quantity of criticism, but practically all of it, except a lengthy analysis of *Light in August* by Professors Linn and Taylor of the University of Chicago, has been written in a rather general way to illustrate some thesis. The two extremes among many such unbalanced approaches are those of Mr. Alfred Kazin, in whose opinion Faulkner's work mainly demonstrates the "agony" of "profligate rhetoric," and Mr. George Marion O'Donnell, in whose opinion Faulkner's work at its best has the same kind of meaning as Dante's *Divine Comedy*. This paper attempts to make a critical analysis of two of Faulkner's best novels, *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and The Fury*, as an inductive approach to what must be a somewhat complex generalization about his literary merits and defects.

The characters in *As I Lay Dying* reveal themselves and other characters in soliloquies, sometimes like diary confessions, which form the framework of the whole book. The rather simple plot is sometimes delayed considerably when the same parts of it are reported, in contrapuntal fashion, by several different witnesses, but there is compensation in the difference of flavor deriving from, say, the idiot Vardaman's report and the insane Darl's imaginative account of exactly the same action. And there is no want of action as these depraved hill folk surmount almost unbelievable difficulties in taking Addie Bundren's corpse thirty miles away from home for burial.

The tragedy of Addie's life, as we can infer gradually from her comments and those of her relatives and neighbors, is due, in part at least, to artificial modern tastes acquired while she

was a school teacher. After her experience with modernity she cannot be satisfied with a traditional type of marriage but commits adultery with the modern minister Whitfield. Of course, there are other, less artificial, reasons why she hates her husband, Anse. He is shiftless and ignorant, "caring for nothing," as an observant neighbor says, "except how to get something with the least amount of work." When the doctor finally comes, after Addie is nearly dead, Anse denies having sent for him and says:

And now I got to pay for it, me without a tooth in my head, hoping to get ahead enough so I could get my mouth fixed where I could eat God's own victuals as a man should, and her hale and well as ere a woman in the land until that day.

He goes through great suffering in order to carry out Addie's dying request to be buried in Jefferson—and then remarries on the same day that he buries her.

Addie's story of her life, told Spoon-River-like from the grave, is a model of compactly powerful dramatic narrative. In the following passage Faulkner's ability, like a metaphysical poet, to juxtapose poetic eloquence and the realistic idiom of homely speech—both with equal skill—is well illustrated:

In the early spring it was worst. Sometimes I thought that I could not bear it, lying in bed at night, with the wild geese going north and their honking coming faint and high and wild out of the wild darkness, and during the day it would seem as though I couldn't wait for the last one to go so I could go down to the spring. And so when I looked up that day and saw Anse standing there in his Sunday clothes, turning his hat round and round in his hands, I said:

"If you've got any women folks, why in the world dont they make you get your hair cut?"

"I aint got none," he said. Then he said suddenly, driving his eyes at me like two hounds in a strange yard: "That's what I come to see you about."

She tells of her subsequent disillusionment and misery but she does not blame Anse entirely: "I realized that I had been tricked by words older than Anse or love, and that the same word had tricked Anse too, and that my revenge would be that he would

never know I was taking revenge." The companion in her great sin is not revealed until the soliloquy of the minister, Whitfield, whose whole career, resembling that of a combined Elmer Gantry and Arthur Dimmesdale, is revealed with perfect dramatic economy in two and one-half pages. On learning that Addie is near death he "wrestles with Satan and emerges victorious" in the resolution to confess his sin to the husband. But he risks his life in crossing a swollen stream to get to her home, decides that this is sufficient expiation, and resumes his ministerial authority:

I entered the house of bereavement, the lowly dwelling where another erring mortal lay while her soul faced the awful and irrevocable judgment, peace to her ashes.

"God's grace upon this house," I said.

In spite of their domination by obsessions, the presentation of which seems almost an obsession on the part of Faulkner, most of the other characters are equally vivid though less compactly sketched. Cash's obsession is carpentering. During the last few days of his mother's life he builds her coffin and shows parts of it for her approval. Through the long, hot days, and even at night while a fierce rain beats down, his "saw snores steadily into the board." Dewey Dell's one desire is to secure medicine which will stop her pregnancy because she is unmarried. Vardaman, the idiot boy, constantly confuses a big dead fish with his dead mother in language which is most skillfully and yet poetically adapted to his mentality:

Pa walks around. His shadow does. The saw sounds like it is asleep.

And so if Cash nails the box up, she is not a rabbit. And so if she is not a rabbit I couldn't breathe in the crib and Cash is going to nail it up. And so if she lets him it is not her. I know. I was there. I saw when it did not be her. I saw. They think it is and Cash is going to nail it up.

It [the fish] was not her because it was laying right yonder in the dirt. And now it's all chopped up. I chopped it up. It's laying in the kitchen in the bleeding pan, waiting to be cooked and et. Then it wasn't and she was, and now it is and she wasn't. And tomorrow it will be cooked and et and she will be him and pa and Cash and

Dewey Dell and there wont be anything in the box and so she can breathe.

The peculiarity connected with each character reappears again and again in the course of the book as a lugubrious accompaniment to their one common task—carrying the corpse in the wagon to Jefferson. For example, Dewey Dell is persuaded by a soda fountain clerk posing as a doctor to submit to a second violation which, he tells her, will make negative the results of the first. Far more lugubrious are certain complications that follow the crossing of the swollen stream. The description again and again of the almost unbearable stench of the corpse; the ever bolder buzzards which at times even light on the coffin and which hop around just out of reach of Vardaman's stick; the burning of the barn with the sensational rescue of the putrefying corpse. The steady portrayal of devotion to duty, sincere if oddly conceived, seems to be adulterated in details like these with the less idealistic purpose of harassing the reader's sensibilities after the manner of some of Poe's short stories. It seems unfortunate that Faulkner should have been influenced by this aspect of Poe rather than by Poe's admirable plot arrangement. The plot of *As I Lay Dying* wanders into an anti-climax with the prolongation of the story after the crossing of the stream, which is the first and by far the greatest difficulty met on the journey. Nor is there any new development in the characters after this event; each one merely exhibits anew the same peculiarities already amply illustrated. I think the story should have been shorter, with the burning of the barn omitted, other sensational parts toned down, and a progressive development toward the crossing of the stream as the climax. Certainly in this book Faulkner does not deserve the high praise given to his form by Professor Joseph Warren Beach, who calls him "a born storyteller if there ever was one," and Mr. Alfred Kazin, who calls him one of the great experimentalists of all time. This experimental structure is little more than a light framework hastily thrown together to justify the unmotivated Tourneurian eloquence.

I suggest the omission of the fire because it seems to be devised only to furnish action for the only character in the book who does not come alive, the insane Darl. Until he burns the barn, Darl never does anything except comment on the other characters in beautiful and highly sophisticated language. At times, it is true, Darl's language seems as well adapted to him as that of the other characters to them. (Only in a few sophisticated speeches of Dewey Dell and Vardaman does their language fail to fit them almost perfectly.) The following passage seems somewhat indebted to Joyce but it is nevertheless appropriate for Darl:

And since sleep is is-not and rain and wind are *was*, it is not. Yet the wagon *is*, because when the wagon is *was*, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel *is*, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am *is*.

A philosopher might find some degree of philosophical depth in this language, but it could just as easily be accidental in the psychodramatic reverie of an insane and uneducated son grieving for his dead mother. The same cannot be said, however, of the following magnificent if romantically loose description which is also attributed to Darl;

It [the dead face] is like a casting of fading bronze upon the pillow, the hands alone still with any semblance of life: a curled, gnarled inertness; a spent yet alert quality from which weariness, exhaustion, travail has not yet departed, as though they doubted even yet the actuality of rest, guarding with horned and penurious alertness the cessation which they know cannot last.

Darl appears twenty times in the book with longer soliloquies than those of any other character, while Vardaman appears only ten and no other character over five times. And Darl is frequently given some of the most eloquent language in any of Faulkner's books—many more, like the description of the stream, quite as good as the one quoted above. These magnificent speeches enrich the texture of the story, but they never succeed in making Darl seem more than the dimmest of shadows. If it

be argued that his insanity does not require vivid delineation, then by the same argument Vardaman ought to be, let us say, idiotically vague, but with the possible exception of Anse, Vardaman is the most clearly drawn character in the book. I believe that Darl can be accounted for only in some such way as this: It was probably Faulkner's intention to write one book in which he would keep himself completely in the background, but as the story progressed, the strain was too great. He did not want to change the original plan of the book, and so created the insane son Darl, who, though ignorant, has an inexplicable mastery of beautiful sophisticated language. It was easy enough then to add the burning of the barn to furnish some action appropriate to his insanity.

But aside from the question of its appropriateness to the speaker, much of Faulkner's poetic diction has an internal weakness in the handling of metaphor. Consider the following characteristic example: "It is as though upon a face carved by a savage caricaturist a monstrous burlesque of all bereavement flowed." John Crowe Ransom would object to this metaphor on the ground that the *burlesque* and the liquid that flowed—the two terms, or what I. A. Richards calls the vehicle and the tenor—are not correlative, that is, not logically parallel. This does not disturb me, but I do object to the straining for effect indicated in the adjectives *savage* and *monstrous* and other similar words—for example, *terrific* in "rigid terrific hiatus"—found all too frequently in Faulkner's writing. Even if we grant the validity of the straining, such words are objectionable because, from a more technical standpoint, they make no metaphorical effort at all but merely attempt to secure the effect by naming it.

As usual, Faulkner leaves certain events mysteriously unexplained until some character, perhaps one hundred pages later, makes a casual reference which clears up the minor mystery. There is less obscurity here than in some of the other novels, like *Sanctuary*, and, except in connection with the runaway buggy and the burning barn, it is applied more subtly to the gradual revelation of character. There are, for example, many

hints concerning the tragedy of Addie Bundren's life which become gradually more nearly explicit until finally she makes the powerful confession in her soliloquy.

While the point of view in *As I Lay Dying* shifts frequently and abruptly from one character to another, the point of view in *The Sound and the Fury* is changed only three times with dates only a day apart prefixed for the sake of unity to three of the four divisions of the book. Appropriately the story entitled *The Sound and the Fury* begins literally with a tale told by an idiot—the psycho-dramatic reverie of a thirty-three-year-old idiot, member of a degenerate aristocratic Southern family. Sights, sounds, and smells recall to Benjy, as vividly as to Proust's Swann, whole sections of his childhood, but he confuses these memories with present occurrences. Through Benjy we learn about other members of the family. The cynical, improvident father seems to have Macbeth's pessimistic philosophy without Macbeth's energy or ambition; he escapes boredom by having parties in the house while his wife is sick in bed upstairs. The self-righteous mother is mistreated and yet is concerned only about her own pains, and her misfortune in marrying into this family, against whose bad blood, as she says, one cannot fight. Her brother Maury drinks liquor constantly, sponges off his brother-in-law, and has affairs with a neighbor's wife. The tattling son Jason is arrogant because he is the only child whom his mother loves. The daughter Caddy, though unselfishly kind to Benjy, becomes at an early age an amateur harlot. Benjy bellows or moans most of the time except when Caddy is with him or when the negro Luster gives him a jimson weed and allows him to run up and down the fence watching the golfers on the neighboring course. There are excellent pictures, too, of the negro servants—the faithful cook and housemaid Dilsey with her shiftless husband and still more shiftless and mischievous children, especially Luster, who delights in making Benjy bellow by snatching away his jimson weed or whispering "Caddy!" in his ear. Of all the main characters and most of the minor ones only the son Quentin is not completely characterized in what we may infer from Benjy's

stream-of-consciousness narrative. (The picture of Quentin is appropriately left vague until his own vivid revelation of his tortured existence in the second part of the story.) In the first part the setting, too, in the aristocratic part of a small Southern town is clear but not particularized enough to count as local color. Instead, Faulkner puts more emphasis on tone—the tone of stark futility which unifies the whole story in spite of its anticlimactical plot sequence.

The order of the scenes is appropriately confused in the idiot's mind; he even confuses the names occasionally and can't tell the difference between a funeral (of his grandmother) and a wedding (probably the one designed to retrieve Caddy's honor). Benjy's musings, furthermore, are never thrown into the philosophico-poetic language that sometimes destroys the illusion in the speech of the idiot Vardaman in *As I Day Dying*. And Benjy's actions are always effectively reported in his own language or what would be his language, if he were not literally dumb. For example, this innocent and pathetic account of his attacking some girls, as a result of which we later learn that he was castrated, seems perfectly realistic as the language and psychology of an idiot:

They came on. I opened the gate and they stopped, turning. I was trying to say, and I caught her, trying to say, and she screamed and I was trying to say and trying and the bright shapes began to stop and I tried to get out. I tried to get it off of my face, but the bright shapes were going again. They were going up the hill to where it fell away and I tried to cry. But when I breathed in, I couldn't breathe out again to cry, and I tried to keep from falling off the hill and I fell off the hill into the bright, whirling shapes.

This whole division of the story, ingeniously contrived as it is, would be one of the most skillful treatments of antecedent exposition in the history of the novel but for one main defect. The illusion is destroyed by the remarkable clarity and completeness with which this idiot reports the speech of the other characters, including even a Latin sentence quoted by the pseudo-philosophical father. Faulkner has, of course, attempted to do

two very difficult things at the same time—to present the psychology of an idiot and to give enough antecedent exposition for the rest of the story—all from the point of view of the idiot. The technical problem could not be solved—if he was to retain the unified point of view, which is one of the main advantages of the stream-of-consciousness method. It was necessary to have an exact report of the speeches of the other characters if the idiot's account of his own reactions was to be understood, as it ought to be, in relation to the norm from which he deviates. But he is not the one to give such an accurate account of those speeches and actions. The other alternative would have been shifting the point of view every time another character speaks. This of course is what really happens, but if we consider that such a frequent change is made, then not only will Faulkner lose the unified point of view but the chaotic order of the scenes will appear to be manipulated by a capriciously omniscient author. Faulkner has succeeded admirably in the separate parts of his double effort, but the combination remains an unconvincing tour de force.

The second part of the book, a flash-back from April 7, 1928, date of the first, to June 2, 1910, is reported from the point of view of Benjy's brother, Quentin Compson, sensitive, intelligent, but half-insane Harvard student. The contrapuntal relationship between the two sections is effectively managed in the contrast between Quentin's reaction and that of Benjy to some of the same events. From some of his remarks that are disconnected in true stream-of-consciousness form but intensified by anguish into lyrical outburst we learn that Quentin's suffering is caused by the recollection of his sister Caddy's amateur but persistent harlotry. These reminiscent passages perform a double function like that of the chorus in a Greek tragedy: they assist in antecedent exposition and at the same time they express poetically and intensely the fateful philosophy suggested by the central calamity.

Faulkner's handling of mental drama in this part, like Joyce's, is in form both impressionistic and expressionistic. Scenes like that describing the old negro on the mule at the train are realistic

in their vivid description and accurate psychological analysis, but they are shifted with impressionistic rapidity. Then at times Quentin's emotional reactions to his unwilling recovery of lost time are expressed in symbolical forms that are effectively if weirdly expressionistic. Again and again, for example, he mentions the flat-irons, and finally imagines himself dropping them in a stream with this comment:

And maybe when He says Rise the eyes will come floating up too, out of the deep quiet and the sleep, to look on glory. And after awhile the flat irons would come floating up.

We may infer from this and similar passages that (subconsciously at least) Quentin contemplated ending Caddy's shame by murdering her and sinking her body with the flat-irons. He wonders then about the immortality of her soul—half believing and yet doubting because he has been influenced by the cynical skepticism of his father, who considers nothing a sin and refuses to share his son's concern over Caddy. Quentin realizes that his father's attitude represents the ultimate in futility ("On the instant when we come to realize that [virginity is just a word], tragedy is second-hand") and he struggles against it by trying (unsuccessfully) to make his father believe him guilty of incest with Caddy. His suffering is further intensified by memories of Benjy's pathetic devotion to her: the idiot, "lying on the ground under the window bellowing," because he had somehow sensed her disgrace.

Quentin would be a potentially tragic figure if he were not such a weak character. On at least two occasions he succumbs to the same weakness that he deplores in Caddy, and the fulfillment of his desire to commit incest with her would not have been a step toward tragedy but toward a still more futile state of degeneracy than he has protested against.

Quentin's condition illustrates the rather strained logic in Mr. O'Donnell's thesis, which is that in Faulkner's books the traditional-minded, ethically responsible Sartorisés (in this book the Compsons) are arrayed against the modern a-moral Snopeses.

The difficulty is that it is too hard to tell the difference between the two groups. In *The Sound and the Fury*, for example, the protagonist Quentin actually commits Snopes-like crimes, and Caddy seems to revel in them—to such an extent that it is certainly a moot question whether she has been defiled by the Jefferson boys or whether she has defiled them. And in *As I Lay Dying* Anse has certainly led a life remarkably like a Snopes. Even his one act of long-delayed devotion is in part an excuse to get for himself a new set of teeth in Jefferson, where he remarries on the same day that he buries his wife. Mr. O'Donnell of course explains that the degeneracy of the Sartorises, who were originally true representatives of the old South, is due to their having been corrupted by the Snopeses, but this explanation does not sufficiently account for such a decline. Traditional Southerners would certainly have put up a much better fight morally than do the Sartorises. They would have suffered poverty at the hands of the carpetbagger Snopeses and yet have clung all the more fiercely to traditional standards of morality.

The ending of the second part of *The Sound and the Fury* is an anticlimax that supports the desolate emptiness of Quentin's father's philosophy. "One day you'd think misfortune would get tired, but then time is your misfortune," his father had told him. "A gull on an invisible wire attached through space dragged. You carry the symbol of your frustration into eternity." "You cannot bear," said his father again, "to think that some day it [Caddy's disgrace] will no longer hurt you like this." Quentin at the last seems to be persuaded that "love or a sorrow is a bond purchased without design . . . and recalled without warning to be replaced by whatever issue the gods happen to be floating at the time." This passage resembles Hardy's famous President of the Immortals comment at the end of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and one might expect here as powerful a climax as that which makes Hardy's passage profoundly moving; but Faulkner ends with a very commonplace act—Quentin brushing his teeth and apparently converted to his father's apathy. Such resignation to blank apathy also makes an effective ending, though

less moving of course than Hardy's. And Faulkner has cleverly designed a double effect for this conclusion to the study of Quentin. Not until close to the end of the fourth part of the story do we learn that Quentin's apparent resignation was closely followed by his suicide. After this disclosure a rereading of the ending of the second part makes the very commonplaceness appear portentous. But whether it is read as acquiescence in hopeless apathy, or reread as prelude to a pathetic suicide, the effect cannot be called tragic, nor does it seem likely that Faulkner intended to represent Quentin as even striving toward tragedy. Quentin seems intended, rather, to represent the modern version of Hamlet. He has all of the frustrated indecisiveness of Shakespeare's protagonist, but he lacks the nobility of character which gives dignity to Hamlet's suffering.

The third part of *The Sound and the Fury*, related by a third Compson brother, Jason, presents an effective contrast to both of the first two. Jason is mentally more nearly normal than his two brothers, and his language is appropriately almost entirely straight narrative with conventional sentences and punctuation. But Jason, since the death of his father head of the Compson household, has developed into a sadistic and at times almost fiendish tyrant, bullying even his own mother and stealing her money. He also steals the money that the exiled Caddy sends to her daughter, Quentin, child of sin, whose upbringing has been graciously undertaken by Jason and his mother. The revolting cheapness of Jason's character is all the more clearly revealed in his constant rationalization, which forms a lurid background to the dramatic struggle between him and the strong-willed Quentin in the last two parts of the book. Strictly speaking, the plot here is related to the first Quentin's mental struggle only as a kind of postlude, but from one standpoint it may be justified as the hereditary result (in the second Quentin) of Caddy's disgrace, as contrasted with its immediate effect in the second part of the story on the first Quentin. Faulkner's principal method of obtaining unity is through his relentless emphasis on the same tone that pervades the earlier parts: life's fitful fever,

desolate and meaningless, for all except very simple people like the faithful old negro, Dilsey. How better show the utter absence of meaning in life than to have Quentin turn for escape from this neurotic household to that very sin of her mother which had caused the first Quentin so much suffering? She runs away with a travelling showman and the enraged Jason pursues her—not to restore her to virtue but to recover the money which belongs to her and which she has taken from his room.

In the fourth part of the book Faulkner uses the omniscient author technique to prepare with more ironic objectivity for the anticlimax that is appropriate to the conclusion of a tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing. For example, he makes the chase an occasion for an ironic dramaturgical device: Jason in his frenzy has all the determination of Milton's Satan. He thinks of himself "dragging Omnipotence down from His throne, if necessary; of the embattled legions of both hell and heaven through which he tore his way and put his hands at last on his fleeing niece." Such words would seem to foreshadow a powerful tragic conclusion, but the ending is destined to be as devoid of significance as the philosophy of Jason's father. Further irony appears in Dilsey's prophetic words inspired by the eloquent sermon of the Reverend Mr. Shegog at the negro church: "Jason aint comin' home. Ise seed de first en de last." But Jason does come home in ignominious defeat after he is almost killed by the little old man whom he accuses of hiding the guilty pair. Cowardly at heart for all his blustering, he returns and then vents his rage by striking the helpless idiot and beating his attendant Luster. Thus nothing tragic has happened, but the ending powerfully reinforces the dominant tone of futility which makes even misfortune meaningless and is more desolate than tragedy.

Faulkner very skillfully unifies his story also by repeating at the end certain characteristic incidents that open the story. Benjy again runs up and down the fence watching the golf ball and bellowing for Caddy, whose name is teasingly whispered in his ear by the negro Luster. For consolation once more at the end as at the beginning, Benjy is taken for a ride to the grave-

yard and given a flower, which is broken when Jason strikes him and which he gazes at with blank serenity on the slow journey home.

As is evident, then, *The Sound and the Fury* is a much more carefully planned book than *As I Lay Dying*. The anticlimax in the stories of the two Quentins is appropriate to the dominant tone of the book, while that of *As I Lay Dying* is accidental, since the theme is the overcoming of almost impossible obstacles in the achievement of a task of devotion. The somewhat excessive rhetoric of *As I Lay Dying* is not present in *The Sound and the Fury* except for a few euphuistic descriptions like the following:

The road rose again to a scene like a painted backdrop Beside it a weathered church lifted its crazy steeple like a painted church, and the whole scene was as flat and without perspective as a painted cardboard set upon the ultimate edge of the flat earth, against the windy sunlight of space and April and a midmorning filled with bells.

Here Faulkner tries to give cosmic significance to a simple scene that is not vital to the story, and the effect, in spite of the pleasing rhythm, the musical words, and the romantic sadness of the tone, is rather flat. But the lyrical eloquence of the first Quentin's reflections on Caddy's sin and on the sad dubiousness of immortality is well motivated:

It was a while before the last stroke ceased vibrating. It stayed in the air, more felt than heard, for a long time. Like all the bells that ever rang still ringing in the long dying light-rays and Jesus and Saint Francis talking about his sister. . . . If we could just have done something so dreadful that they would have fled hell except us. *I have committed incest I said Father it was I it was not Dalton Ames...* And I will look down and see my murmuring bones and the deep water like wind, like a roof of wind, and after a long time they cannot distinguish even bones upon the lonely and inviolate sand.

Faulkner's style cannot be disposed of by accusing him of laboring in the "agony" of "profligate rhetoric." As in this passage, he often enriches not only the texture but also the structure of his

story by elevating his language to render a situation already charged with emotional intensity.

Faulkner might have portrayed his degenerate characters more effectively if, like Dostoievski, he had introduced enough normal characters to make a striking contrast. Dostoievski uses his normal characters also to reveal in his degenerate characters hidden motives that would not appear in the technique of self-revelation. In *The Possessed*, for example, the complex character of Stavrogin is more fully revealed through the shrewd understanding of Bishop Tihon, to whom he confesses his corruption of the little girl Matryosha.

Faulkner's characters, however, are vividly and truly portrayed, as far as his limited method will allow. And this is a remarkable accomplishment in view of his preoccupation, almost as much as Poe, with tone. Quentin reveals his own nature as completely as the self-revelation of a half-insane person can go. The portrait of Jason also is as effectively drawn (unwittingly by himself) as are those in the best of Browning's dramatic monologues, though with less compactness. And the psychology and dialect of the negro have never been better portrayed than in *The Sound and the Fury*. Particularly skillful is the negro church service, in handling which with perfect realism Faulkner avoids both sentimentalism and satire. The quasi-educated minister begins with fairly correct formal English but in the heat of his sermon gradually slips into the negroid intonation and pronunciation indicated by the following passage:

I tells you, breddren, en I tells you, sistuhn, dev'll come a time. Po sinner sayin Let me lay down wid de Lawd, lemme lay down my load. Den whut Jesus gwine say, O breddren? O sistuhn? Is you got de ricklickshun en de Blood of de Lamb? Case I aint gwine load down heaven!

His impassioned message is accompanied by a low concerted sound of approval from the congregation: "Mmmmmmmmm!" and by the woman's chorus, "Yes, Jesus! Jesus!"

Faulkner's stream-of-consciousness technique, except in the section devoted to Quentin, differs considerably from Joyce's.

The language of the idiot, for example, is for the most part given in short but complete sentences that are appropriate to the simple completeness of his separate sensations as contrasted with the chaotic order of their appearance. Quentin's reverie, on the other hand, is presented mainly in disconnected phrases thrown together with very little punctuation or capitalization to represent the half-insane condition of a mind far more complex than Benjy's. The technique here is like Joyce's except that Faulkner has more frequent intervals of connected narrative, which makes an appropriate medium for Quentin's account of extended actions like his meeting and sordid association with the young Italian girl. Frequent thoughts of Caddy's life throw his mind again into chaos, which is represented by the pure stream-of-consciousness method. Faulkner's language thus seems more realistic than Joyce's in its adaptation to varying psychological situations. Joyce of course has the advantage of learned allusions and elaborate word play. Especially in *Finnegan's Wake* he exploits his language through puns and irrelevant words that sound and are spelled somewhat, often very little, like those which are relevant. This method gives the effect of brilliance and breadth, but the frequent irrelevancies require the rather dubious explanation (of Joyce's disciples) that they are psychologically relevant. In *The Sound and the Fury*, on the other hand, Quentin's most chaotic language, even when it is symbolic and expressionistic, can be related directly to the story.

Faulkner's general method of writing seems likely to be that of the main stream of future novelists. Readers in the future will probably demand more action and more of a connected plot than Joyce has given them, but they will also demand a more realistic exploration of mental drama than the traditional novel has offered. Faulkner has attempted the very difficult combination of these two methods—a prose approach to Coleridge's balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities—and at his best he has made considerable progress in that direction. But he has not yet evolved a sure feeling for form out of his varied experiments. If he overcomes this difficulty, he will, in spite of his limited subject matter, produce works that will be major classics in our literature.

by Solomon Fishman

VIRGINIA WOOLF ON THE NOVEL

THE views of a critic who has made his mark in one of the branches of imaginative literature have a special claim upon our attention mainly because we feel that he has greater access to the mysteries of his craft than the curious outsider. In our own time we have come to expect the most acute criticism of poetry from the poets themselves. The novelists have not displayed an equal volubility concerning the exercise of their art; hence the extraordinary interest which attends the commentaries of Flaubert and James on their own novels and on fiction generally. In the present century only a few novelists of first rank have seriously occupied themselves with the criticism of fiction, among them Virginia Woolf. One should expect from the novelist an illumination of the actual making of novels and a greater intimacy with the problems of the craft than one obtains from the lay-critic. Mrs. Woolf disappoints us in this. Inhibited by the scruple that the "agony" of creation can be of moment only to the creator, she deliberately severs her critical writings from her novels. The discontinuity is illusory, of course, and her disguise as lay-reader never quite succeeds. Despite preliminary disavowals of specialized knowledge, the *Common Readers* do not really mask a writer who was one of the boldest innovators in fiction and an artist highly sensitive to technique and significance.

Impressionism afforded her the freedom which would have been denied by a rigorous analytical method, and no doubt was more responsive to her particular gift as stylist. Without deprecating the achievement of her critical essays, some of which are unsurpassed in style and finish in the whole field of English letters, one regrets Virginia Woolf's silence on a subject into which she

must have had great insight—the means by which the novelist transforms the conceptual and general into the concrete and specific. But if she waived the task of elucidating her own experience, she was always curious about this experience in other novelists. Unconsciously, perhaps, she sought in the masterpieces of the past and recent past a verification of her aims in fiction. Her professional interests, therefore, are sublimated but never wholly submerged; in the long run they alone endow her criticism with relevance and value. They enable her to look at a novel squarely, neither as a mirror of social influences, nor as an accretion of the author's psychic predicament. Awareness of historical and psychological facts in the genesis of the novel is not absent from her criticism, but origins are consistently subordinated to value. Almost exclusively her criticism was an attempt to locate the virtues which differentiate greatness in fiction, and to establish a scale of values.

In the realm of aesthetic speculation there is no task more redoubtable than the formulation of standards in fiction. The major dilemmas which baffle the critic of poetry are magnified for the critic of fiction by the absence of landmarks which at least indicate the alternatives—the *loci critici* of an Aristotle, Coleridge, T. S. Eliot, or I. A. Richards. It is no wonder that in coping with fiction the critic resorts to impressionism, to the vague and unscientific. E. M. Forster has said that "Principles and systems may suit other forms of art, but they cannot be applicable here," and Virginia Woolf concurred. Her criticism operated by intuition without the mediation of method; she had a flair for "profound general statements which are caught up by the mind when hot with the friction of reading," which was reinforced by temperamental aversion to systems and conclusions, whether metaphysical or aesthetic. Her critical gift flourished in an encounter with a particular novel or novelist but was diminished when it attempted the statement of principles. We cannot hope, therefore, to discover in her writings a rationale of fiction, but only a series of insights and perceptions which may, when coördinated, adumbrate an aesthetic.

Here is one of her ventures in generalization, a statement as remarkable for its diffuseness as for its honesty.

Life escapes, and perhaps without life nothing else is worth while. It is a confession of vagueness to have to use such a figure as this, but we scarcely better the matter by speaking as critics are prone to do, of reality. Admitting the vagueness which afflicts all criticism of novels, let us hazard the opinion that for us at this moment the form of fiction most in vogue more often misses than secures the thing we seek. Whether we call it life or spirit, truth or reality, this, the essential thing has moved off, or on . . .

In it we recognize a critic who was not easily deflected from the main task, the search for the "essential thing." One might construe the failure in definition as a concomitant of loose thinking; it would be more benevolent to regard it as an admission of defeat on the part of one who had pursued certain lines of inquiry to an ultimate impasse, to an idea so volatile that it cannot be conveyed except in hypostatic terms. Obviously, isolated from its total context, the statement has little value. It is necessary to work back from it, to trace the strands of speculation which point toward it and are implicated in it. The terms employed are provocative: *truth* and *reality* are crucial in the discussion of imaginative literature and can disclose a great deal about the critic's position if we can determine their referents. Since their ambivalence proceeds from the imitative character of literature, they may relate to either of two entities, the imitation itself or the thing imitated; or they might be made to refer to the connecting link which unites both entities. Upon the critic's understanding of these terms is predicated a philosophic and an aesthetic judgment of literature, and beyond them an aesthetics in which philosophical and critical views are subsumed.

The epistemological cleavage inherent in the terms *truth* and *reality* corresponds to the familiar division of critics into formalists and moralists. It is not easy to assign Virginia Woolf categorically to either camp. A novelist is less inclined than a poet to grant an autotelic existence to literature, yet Mrs. Woolf was not vehement in rejecting that view. At most she was willing to con-

cede that "fiction is like a spider's web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners." When confronted by unequivocal aestheticism, however, she took a firmer stand, protesting Roger Fry's notion that "everything must come out of the matière of prose and not out of the ideas and emotions he [the writer] describes." While she trusted Fry's judgments on painting, she refused to follow him when he carries them over into literature. Yet we cannot ascribe to her the alternative of a naïve utilitarian or moralistic conception of literature, for nothing irritated her more than a doctrinal novel or a novelist who labors his narrative with elevating discourse or instruction.

Virginia Woolf's critical approach precluded a dualistic interpretation of literature; it focused sharply on the point at which "life and something that is not life" are fused, rather than on the differences which separate art and life. Her real preoccupation was with what Mr. Blackmur calls "the formal means by which the poet can convey an illusion of actuality." This may not be apparent on the surface of her criticism, for it contains few explicit references to form, just as it renounces the whole question of technique. The omission is striking, but fortunately the lacuna has been filled by other writers, notably Percy Lubbock, whose *Craft of Fiction* is almost everything her criticism is not—a controlled, analytic, coherent study of technique in fiction. But Lubbock's work, although essential, is preliminary, and overcautious in withholding the act of evaluation until the novel as an *object* is disengaged and held to the light. For, as Virginia Woolf maintains, if a book is an object, it is capable of producing an effect; and although an understanding of how the book was made may explain the effect, the latter is what is of primary concern to both novelist and critic. At any rate, this is the only logical motive I can perceive for her treatment of the problem of form in terms of theory rather than of technique. Form interests her not as the subject of clinical scrutiny, but only as an aspect of the novelist's power—the power "to force us along [his] road, make us see what [he] sees."

II

The impulse which governs the direction of Virginia Woolf's criticism is the effort to resolve the polar tensions of philosophic and aesthetic criteria in literature. In her words, "a novel starts in us all sorts of antagonistic and opposed emotions. Life conflicts with something that is not life. . . . The whole structure, it is obvious, thinking back on any famous novel, is one of infinite complexity, because it is thus made up of so many different judgments, of so many different kinds of emotion."

If we examine the philosophical criteria which she applied to fiction, we find them to be conventional enough, and we can pass over them rapidly. She demanded that it present a significant account of man's experience in relation to his fellows, to the external world, and to that abstraction which "for want of a more precise term we call 'life itself'." There are degrees, furthermore, by which the writer's philosophic contribution may be measured. First, delicacy and fineness of perception—the quality which Jane Austen exhibits more perfectly than most novelists. "Think away the surface animation, the likeness to life, and there remains to provide a deeper pleasure, an exquisite discrimination of human values." Then, breadth and inclusiveness, evinced in the compass of a mind like Tolstoi's, of whom she says that "nothing seems to escape him. Nothing glances off him unrecorded. . . . Even in a translation we feel that we have been set on a mountain-top and had a telescope put in our hands." Surpassing these in her scale is the dimension of depth, which is founded upon insight and compassion, on understanding of the soul and the "knowledge of what is most persistent . . . in human nature." Profuse in these qualities, the Russian writers, particularly Tchekov and Dostoievsky, made a powerful impression on Virginia Woolf, and left her with an acute sense of the inadequacies of the English novel. "The novels of Dostoievsky are seething whirlpools, grating sandstorms, waterspouts which hiss and boil and suck us in. They are composed purely and wholly of soul. Out of Shakespeare there is no more exciting reading."

This passage demonstrates how criticism can deteriorate into effusion. Virginia Woolf's best, that is, her most original and discerning criticism occurs not when she is describing philosophical attributes, but when she engages in the more difficult phase of the critic's task, the discrimination of aesthetic properties, of what makes a novel a novel, and what causes one narrative to act with so much greater effect than another. And when she is so engaged she is almost willing to throw overboard philosophic considerations. Ideological criticism founders upon a novel like *Wuthering Heights*. "We are given every opportunity of comparing *Wuthering Heights* with a real farm and Heathcliffe with a real man. How, we are allowed to ask, can there be truth or insight or the finer shades of emotion in men and women who so little resemble what we have seen ourselves? But even as we ask it we see in Heathcliffe the brother that a sister of genius might have seen: he is impossible, we say, but nevertheless no boy in literature has so vivid an existence as his." There is no trace in the book of the power of observation, nor of speculative curiosity concerning the problems of life; instead of breadth of view, there are only "impressions close packed and strongly stamped between . . . narrow walls." Lacking virtually all of the equipment which ordinarily marks the competence of a novelist and the gifts which have attracted to the novelist the widest of audiences, Emily Brontë has nevertheless weathered the test of time, and her reputation is intact.

Obviously if Virginia Woolf regarded *Wuthering Heights* as representative of greatness in fiction, the terms *truth* and *reality* as they appear in the context of her criticism cannot be construed in the primary or literal sense. They cannot be equated with fidelity to fact or with realism. Since her terms fail to provide their own gloss, we must arrive at their meaning obliquely by examining further critical utterances. In the same essay on the Brontës, we read that "It is the suggestion of power underlying the apparitions of human nature, and lifting them up into the presence of greatness that gives the book its huge stature among other novels."

The idea of power provides a clue to the critic's apperception of the nature of the aesthetic process. *Wuthering Heights* was well chosen to illustrate it because it is so patent a specimen of the novel in which power triumphs over a host of inadequacies. It embodies for Virginia Woolf the essence of what differentiates all great novels, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, from the unleavened mass of mediocre books which attempt no more than a mere transcript of life. On the basis of this distinction she consigns the bulk of contemporary fiction to limbo.

No age can have been more rich than ours in writers to give expression to the differences which separate them from the past and not to the resemblances which connect them with it . . . the most casual reader can hardly fail to be impressed by the courage, the sincerity, in a word, by the widespread originality of our time. But our exhilaration is strangely curtailed. Book after book leaves us with the same sense of promise unachieved, of intellectual poverty, of brilliance which has been snatched from life but not transmitted into literature.

I think it will be evident from the foregoing that the novelist's power is the power of transmitting one sort of reality into another sort; that is, the power of imagination, or "esemplastic" imagination, as Coleridge conceived it. Coleridge's nomenclature is reserved for poetry, but its relevance to prose narrative is explicitly provided for. We may assume then that the novelist's power does not differ generically from the poet's. It would be a rough axiom, though a fundamentally correct one, to declare that a great novel is *ipso facto* great poetry. Virginia Woolf does so on more than one occasion. We are informed, for example, that ". . . we read Charlotte Brontë not for exquisite observation of character . . . not for comedy . . . not for a philosophic view of life . . . but for her poetry."

But the difficulty of formulating a critique of fiction is not solved by substituting the word *novel* for the word *poetry* in authoritative critical documents: the problem is first to locate the common ground of poetry and fiction and then to stake out the territories which do not coalesce; in other words, to discover

what elements of poetic composition are compatible with narrative and how poetic elements get into the novel. It is manifest that the technical procedures of the poet and novelist are widely divergent. The novelist lacks the manifold advantages of the poet in the mechanics of composition—compression, the norms of established formal patterns, the manipulation of language on two planes, aural and semasiological. For no matter how hard he may kick against the traces of “representation”, no novelist can abandon himself to metaphorical discourse throughout the length of a narrative; unless, of course, he is the author of *Finnegan's Wake*. Yet ultimately, both poet and novelist are impelled by the same necessity of transmuting the materials of experience—thought, feeling, observation, language—into something different and more valuable than had existed before.

Virginia Woolf's examination of fiction is singular in its emphasis on the relationship of poetry and narrative, but again her indiscriminate terminology leads to confusion. “One wonders,” David Daiches is prompted to ask in *The Novel and the Modern World*, “if Mrs. Woolf's conception of fiction in terms of poetry is not an excuse for remaining in her study. The lyrical mood has many disguises, but its basis like that of the metaphysical mood is egotism.” Mr. Daiche's strictures are justified perhaps if they refer to her conception of fiction as incarnated in her novels, for her work reveals a progressive abandonment of the idiom of prose and an increasingly lyrical style. It is true that the novelist sometimes appropriates the technique of poetry, especially so when “like the Brontës, the writer is poetic, and his meaning is inseparable from his language, and itself rather a mood than a particular observation.” But there is no indication that Virginia Woolf aligns herself with those who would achieve a synthesis at the expense of the dissolution of forms. Whatever aim informs the lyricism of her novels, her critical writings make it clear that the novelist assimilates the method of the poet at his own peril. The conscience of the novelist speaks in the observation that “Meredith and Hardy were imperfect novelists largely because

they insisted upon introducing qualities of thought and poetry, that are perhaps incompatible with fiction at its most perfect."

Yet in another place she appears to contradict herself flatly by the statement that "fiction will be much the better for standing cheek by jowl with poetry and philosophy." The two statements can scarcely be reconciled unless we understand *poetry* to signify different things in each context. In the first instance it denotes *genre*; in the second it has the much broader application of her remark apropos of Aeschylus: "To understand him it is not so necessary to understand Greek as to understand poetry. It is necessary to take that dangerous leap through the air without words. . . . There is an ambiguity which is the mark of the highest poetry; we cannot know exactly what it means." By *poetry* is signified poetic capability, which, as she pointed out, is most fully realized in Shakespeare, less perfectly in Dostoevsky. It is, therefore, not restricted to metrical composition, but common to all types of imaginative literature. Its characteristic, it will be noted, is ambiguity; what she meant by the ambiguity inherent in literature of high order, is the impossibility of ever reducing it to a conceptual paraphrase. We cannot know exactly what it means because the manner in which it is said is part of the meaning and inseparable from the meaning.

Unless we accept this reading of her notion of poetry, we must assume that she believes the poet or novelist to be an irresponsible agent whose chief purpose is mystification. It is no doubt true that Virginia Woolf exhibits a marked predilection for the problematic and fantastic; witness her admiration for Sterne with his "light attachment to the accepted reality, this neglect of the orderly sequence of narrative." This is corroborated to some extent by her own work, *Orlando* particularly, which leads E. M. Foster to bracket her with Sterne as a fantast. "There is even the same tone in their voices—a rather deliberate bewilderment, an announcement to all and sundry that they do not know where they are going." However, and this is of paramount importance, they actually do know where they are going. The

ambiguity of literature is unpredictable, but not accidental; it is willed by the maker. If this were not so, literature would cease to have value for Virginia Woolf.

Poetic power, as she conceives it, is independent of ideology and equivalent to the capacity for evoking ambivalent meanings. The ambivalence exists because literature is compounded of life and "something that is not life." In transmuting the one into the other, the writer is compelled to make some sort of selection from the multifarious items of experience; further, he must juxtapose the items selected in such a manner that they will best express his intention. Selection and arrangement imply design, which in turn is controlled by a master principle. If we grasp the principle, we come close to perceiving the nature of poetic power. The following provides a key—"the meaning of a book, which lies so often apart from what happens and what is said and consists rather in some connection which things in themselves different have had for the writer, is necessarily hard to grasp." "Connection of things in themselves different" suggests Coleridge's description of the synthetic imagination as revealing itself in "the balance and reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities." From Coleridge's complicated system I. A. Richards distils a single term *myth*, perhaps the most useful of all terms in the critique of fiction. Myths, he writes, "are no amusement or diversion to be sought as a relaxation and an escape from the hard realities of life. They are these hard realities in projection, their symbolic recognition, coördination, and acceptance. The opposite and discordant qualities in things in them acquire a form. . . ."

By consciously juxtaposing things not ordinarily associated in "real" life the writer creates something new which is no less real. The symbol-making propensity of the writer, then, is what gives literature its ambiguity, in that symbols, unlike "things" permit infinite possibilities of interpretation. "Thus Defoe, by reiterating that nothing but a plain earthenware pot stands in the foreground, persuades us to see remote islands and the solitudes of the human soul. By believing fixedly in the solidity of the pot

and its earthiness he has subdued every other element to his design; he has roped the whole universe to his harmony." Besides describing symbol, Virginia Woolf here demonstrates its law: The more concrete and particularized the symbol, the greater its projection and its range of reference. Hence the essential "irony" of imaginative literature.

Since the creation of symbol is to some extent arbitrary, a single act of fusion may produce a brilliant image, startling by virtue of its daring or novelty; but it is obvious that great literature is more than a constellation of discrete acts of imagination. Whether we are dealing with a quatrain or a trilogy, we require, in the first place, that the symbol-making process be sustained; in the second, that it be consistent. The act of "recognition," the primary stage in symbol formation is now submitted to, or subsumed in a process of coördination; in brief, it acquires form and order.

When we apply the concept of myth to the writer of fiction, we perceive that not only must he be capable of breaking the mold of passive observation, but that, in view of the physical properties of the novel, he must sustain this power over a considerable extent of space and time. This constitutes the architecture of the novel. In the essay "How Should One Read a Book", Virginia Woolf suggests that the quickest way to grasp the elements of the art of fiction is not by reading, but by writing.

The thirty-two chapters of a novel . . . are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building; but words are more impalpable than bricks; reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing . . . make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you.... But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued; others emphasised; in the process you will lose probably all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist—Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy. Now you will be able to appreciate their

mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person . . . but that we are living in a different world.

The novelist, we perceive, creates a world; from a thousand conflicting impressions he convokes an ordered picture of reality which by virtue of order gives the illusion of completeness. Or, according to Mr. I. A. Richards, he fashions from the incongruity and disorder of experience on the pragmatic level, he fashions a myth which has wholeness and unity. The idea is contained for Mrs. Woolf in the word *vision*—"a vision such as we get in a good novel where everything contributes to bring the writer's conception as a whole before us." Vision makes for wholeness; it also provides unity. "Yet different as these worlds are, [Hardy's, Austen's, Defoe's] each is consistent with itself. The maker of each is careful to observe the laws of his own perspective, and however great a strain he puts upon us, he will never confuse us, as lesser artists frequently do, by introducing two different kinds of reality into the same book." She is willing to allow the novelist much latitude in the method of selection. The transmutation of reality may be so radical or so bizarre that it produces, in her words, an agony in the reader who attempts to adjust the novelist's perspective to his own. Sometimes, in the instance of Emily Brontë, the writer takes extreme liberties in the matter of verisimilitude; sometimes, as with Hardy, he wrenches the fable to the point of mawkishness. Such departures from the norm of narrative practice are tolerated inasmuch as they are subordinated to the greater achievement of vision.

Despite her protest of indifference to origins in fiction, Virginia Woolf finds it impossible to ignore them altogether. As we have seen, she is much occupied with the quality of mind which can produce a succession of images so integrated and sustained in effect that they compel the reader to cede his own perspective and acquiesce, for the time being, in another vision. The creative mind exhibits dual tendencies—a polarity of intensity and restraint. Coleridge's "more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order" is apposite; one might go farther and say that

mythopoeic power is characterized by both the rational and the demonic.

"Symbolic recognition and coöordination" are functions of the rational; "symbolic acceptance," of the demonic. Poetic invention is not the result of mere receptivity to stimuli; it demands, first of all, intense concentration; and second, the courage to keep faith with the symbol after having conjured it. This courage Virginia Woolf calls "integrity." "What one means by integrity, in the case of the novelist, is the conviction that this is the truth. Yes, one feels, I should never have thought that this could be so; I have never known people behaving like that. But you have convinced me so it is, so it happens."

A great deal has been written to prove that art is "artificial", that the making of symbol is a wholly capricious exercise. Virginia Woolf does not hold with this view. Truth in literature, defined by Mr. Daiches as "proper selection combined with the proper handling of symbols," far from being fabricated or contrived, must issue from two sources; from the personal conviction of the writer—"a single person with a single sensibility," and from what Mr. Blackmur terms "anterior conviction." The whole problem, as Mrs. Woolf sees it, is one of utmost subtlety: "For the vision of a novelist is both complex and specialized; complex, because behind his characters and apart from them must stand something stable to which he related them; specialized because since he is a single person with one sensibility the aspects of life in which he can believe with conviction are strictly limited."

The problem of belief is no less pressing for the poet than for the novelist, but it taxes him less heavily. Within the compass of a single poem symbol-making most frequently requires the discovery of "objective correlatives" of emotions and ideas, whereas the novelist is charged with the discovery of the correlatives of the inner and outer lives of men and women in relation to each other and to the world. Yeats has simply to name "the holy city of Byzantium" and a symbolic recognition is made. The novelist sometimes uses this sort of correlative, as in *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* when the false coin is tossed onto the table, but gener-

ally his symbols are more extended: Think of the rôle of Mynheer Peeperkorn in *The Magic Mountain*, or an even more complex instance, the figure of Joseph in Mann's latest work. Since the novelist is committed to dealing with experience in terms of portraiture and plot, the symbol, or rather the configuration of symbols called myth, derives its validity from the tensions which exist between the individual and the universal. When a novel is wholly successful, individual and universal, fable and myth, are so continuous that one can no longer distinguish, in Mr. Austin Warren's phrase, "whether the type incarnated itself or the individual implied a typicality." Virginia Woolf perceives this when she writes that "nobody can deny Hardy's power—the true novelist's power—to make us believe his characters are fellow beings driven by their passions and idiosyncrasies, while they have—and this is the poet's gift—something symbolical about them which is common to us all."

The essay *Modern Fiction* was written in 1919; perhaps in that year Mrs. Woolf was justified in denying mythopoeic power to her contemporaries. (It is worth noting then in writing of the twentieth century novelists she deviates more widely than elsewhere from her rôle of guide to the lay-reader.) The charges she prefers are devastating, but not inapposite. "So then our contemporaries afflict us because they have ceased to believe. The most sincere of them will only tell us what it is that happens to himself. . . . They cannot tell stories because they do not believe the stories are true. They cannot generalize. They depend on their senses and emotions, whose testimony is trustworthy, rather than on their intellects whose message is obscure." Against the modern she posits the writers of a former age—a Scott, Wordsworth, or Jane Austen.

They have their judgment of conduct. They know the relations of human beings toward each other and the universe . . . for certainty of that kind is the condition which makes it possible to write. To believe that your impressions hold good for others is to be released from the cramp and confinement of personality. . . . It is also the first step in that mysterious process in which Jane Austen was so great an

adept. The little grain of experience once selected, believed in, and set outside herself, could be put precisely in its place, and she was then free to make of it, by a process which never yields its secrets to the analyst, into that complete statement which is literature.

She does not explicitly attribute lack of faith or disintegrity to Bennett, Galsworthy, and Wells, who are singled out for attack. Rather, their novels are "materialistic", "concerned not with the spirit but the body." They devote splendid gifts to the task of making the "trivial and transitory appear true and enduring." This is a curious statement from one who delighted in Sterne's notion that a girl might be more interesting than a cathedral and a dead donkey more instructive than a philosopher. It is unfortunate that *important* and *trivial* appear with such lack of precise reference in this context, for they detract from its penetration. That she does not propose to establish a scale of values for the materials of narrative is evident, for in the same essay we read that the "proper stuff of fiction does not exist; everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought; every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon, no perception comes amiss."

The materialism of the Georgians consists, not in their subject matter, but in their inability to submit the "little grain of experience" to the catalyst of symbolic transformation, whereby it becomes free of the author and is ready to take its place in a transcendental reality. The real basis of her animadversions is form. Indeed, all of the focal terms of her critical apparatus—truth, poetry, vision, integrity—are seen to be aspects of form if we agree that form means the angle at which the poet's sensibility converges upon the object in the act of transforming it into symbol. Her real quarrel with Bennett, Wells, and Galsworthy concerns their method, not their ideologies. They rely on observation rather than on insight; their purview is not a poetic vision of life; instead of fashioning symbols they depend upon outworn formulas. Here she reveals the principle which governs her own method: "Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetri-

cally arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end."

It is the spirituality of James Joyce which sets him apart from the others. We are told, furthermore, that his "spirituality" consists precisely in his method; for has not Joyce, like herself, depicted the semi-transparent envelope which surrounds consciousness? But granting the spirituality of his method, granting also that "Any method is right, every method is right that expresses what we wish to express if we are writers; that brings us closer to the novelist's intention if we are readers," she is constrained to withhold total praise, and consigns *Ulysses* to a rank below that of the best novels of Hardy and Conrad. She is not reactionary; she does not cavil at the book's obscurities, nor its technique. The flaw of *Ulysses* is in its method, or rather in the aims of its method: "Is it due to the method that we feel neither jovial nor magnanimous, but centered in a self which, in spite of its tremor of susceptibility, never embraces or creates what is outside itself and beyond?"

It adds to Virginia Woolf's stature as a critic that she was able to perceive the regulative idea which underlies the structure of *Ulysses* when the book was only partially revealed in the installments appearing in *transition*; namely the effort to produce an autonomous piece of literature, a novel so complete, so hermetic, that it becomes an object entirely, and so independent of the author, in Mr. Daiche's phrase "as to make judgment and comparison impossible." Or one might say that Joyce attempts to endow symbol with only one dimension, intensiveness, and to suppress its extension or projection, thus depriving it of "ambiguity."

III

Although the most cogent of Mrs. Woolf's theoretical statements pertain to form, she does not consent to the notion that the ends of criticism are accomplished by defining the "ontological effect" of a novel. The concept of form is valuable for her insofar as it differentiates literature from what is not literature, but it

cannot serve alone as a measure of value. Otherwise, the qualities of magnanimity and joviality which she finds lacking in *Ulysses* could hardly be relevant. The reservations voiced concerning the greatness of *Ulysses* derive from her aesthetic rather than from her theory of criticism.

The views of Joyce and Mrs. Woolf are diametrically opposed at their source. Joyce's aesthetic is expounded in *The Portrait of the Artist*: art, according to Dedalus-Joyce, tends toward the achievement of *stasis*, which implies a state of contemplation, of detachment from the *kinesis* of life. In such a state, "the personality of the artist refines itself out of existence"; the work of art is automatically released from all obligations except the obligation to the exigencies of its own existence, which is its form. I am not sure that Mrs. Woolf would have rejected entirely the Thomist basis of Joyce's aesthetic. Certainly she affirms the non-utilitarian condition of literature and denies its function as propaganda or incitement to action. Writing of *Antigone*, she observes that when the curtain falls we sympathize even with Creon.

This result, to the propagandist undesirable, would seem to be due to the fact that Sophocles . . . uses freely all the faculties that can be possessed by a writer; and suggests that if we use art to propagate political opinions, we must force the artist to clip and cabin his gift to do us a cheap and passing service. Literature will suffer the same mutilation that the mule has suffered, and there will be no more horses.

The Joycean versions of *integras* and *consonantia* are not far from her own notions of vision and integrity; however, *claritas* (Joyce translates *radiance*) would have meant for her something quite different. The difference is one of emphasis, perhaps, but nonetheless radical. Her aesthetic has at its core the concept of the dynamic of literature. The aesthetic experience does not consist in the capture of the object, thereby guaranteeing a cessation of future emotion or activity. The object of art is conceived not as a receptacle but as an agent capable of disclosing to the beholder a constantly expanding realm of ex-

perience. Imaginative literature is a potential: "an idea presented by a great writer explodes and gives birth to all kinds of other ideas, and that is the only sort of writing of which one can say that it has the secret of perpetual life." The motif appears again and again: Great literature sets us free, it releases us from the cramp and confinement of individual experience, it serves as a stimulus rather than as terminal experience—"the reading of these books [*Lear*, *Emma*, *La Recherche du Temps Perdu*] seems to perform a curious couching operation on the senses, one sees more intensely afterwards; the world seems bare of its covering and given an intenser life."

The emphasis is on intellectual response, not on active or emotive reflexes. The essay on George Gissing is particularly pertinent. She finds him, on the whole, a painful writer, lacking virtually all the natural gifts of the novelist. He has never mastered a perspective which excludes his own petty grievances; he is devoid of poetic ability; he has never learned to manage language with grace. One virtue, and that alone, redeems his work. "With all his narrowness of outlook and meagreness of sensibility, Gissing is one of the extremely rare novelists who believes in the power of the mind, who makes his people think. They are thus differently posed from the majority of fictitious men and women . . . the brain works and that alone is enough to give us a sense of freedom. For to think is to become complex; it is to overflow the boundaries, to cease to be a 'character', to merge one's private life in the life of politics or art or ideas. . . ."

We note here the insistence on impersonality as an attribute of aesthetic experience. Not that the importance of personality in literature is underrated. Vision and integrity are, after all, to a large extent, products of personal conviction. But in creating symbol or myth, the writer transforms his perception into something which transcends the individual. The personal element in literature is always a source of power, but one that entails great risk: "the self which, while it is essential to literature, is also its most dangerous antagonist. Never to be yourself and yet always—that is the problem." Joyce devoted tremendous effort to

achieve the plane of pure drama, in which the work of art is released from its dependence on personality; yet to Virginia Woolf, *Ulysses* appears "centered in a self which . . . never creates what is outside itself and beyond." The source of her inability to accept *Ulysses* is to be sought in their respective aesthetic systems. Joyce's has its origins in a theology which values contemplation as highest in the order of human occupations. Her's is rooted in the rationalist and humanist tradition which reaches back to Montaigne—the Montaigne of her paraphrase: "Movement and change are the essence of our being; rigidity is death; conformity is death. . . . For nothing matters except life; and, of course, order."

IV

Virginia Woolf was probably not ill-advised in choosing the amateur rather than the technical approach to literature. It gives her criticism equilibrium, rescues it from the aridity of doctrine unsupported by example, and steers it clear of the adventitious. In closing with the work itself, she dismisses the antecedent and peripheral: "However we may wind and wriggle, loiter and dally in our approach to books, a lonely battle awaits us at the end. There is a piece of business to be transacted between writer and reader before further dealings are possible. . . . Our first task . . . is to master his perspective. Until we know how the novelist orders his world, the ornaments of that world, which the critics press upon us, the adventures of the writer, to which biographers call attention, are superfluous possessions of which we can make no use."

Since Mrs. Woolf practised criticism in the traditional mode of the nineteenth century, its theoretical aspects elude formulation. One might very well appropriate her comment on Hazlitt to her own work: "since in his view, it was the duty of a critic to 'reflect the colours, the light and shade, the soul and body of a work,' appetite, gusto, enjoyment were far more important than analytic subtlety or prolonged and extensive study." The implication here is that the critic may miss a great deal if he

wields too sharp a tool. In reducing the intuitive perceptions of such a critic to formula, and by imputing to them a coherence which does not actually exist, one is likely to commit the error of over-simplification, if not of distortion. However, the components of a system are there, if only potentially, and they invite reconstruction, if only a hypothetical one. The effort to provide her theory with pattern has necessarily excluded a description of the quality and texture of her criticism. Her essays will be read, I feel, because they reflect an independent mind, confident of its judgment and tastes; owing no tribute to authority or convention, but not intimidated by the obvious any more than by the esoteric and obscure. There is a great deal of the flâneur in Virginia Woolf, which sometimes leads her far afield from the main stream of letters, but we are thereby rewarded by an increase of breadth and sympathy. Her essays unite the gusto of the amateur with a devotion to literature which is not surpassed in contemporary letters. One of the few positive beliefs which her scepticism allows her is the conviction that man fulfils himself most completely in the reading and writing of good books. One may argue that this is an excessively narrow point of view; but if it attenuates her scope and limits her powers, it also gives her criticism its peculiar vitality. According to her a novel should be an experience, not a document; there are other attitudes towards literature, but hers is logically unassailable.

Two War Novels

PRIMER FOR COMBAT. By Kay Boyle. Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

THE SEVENTH CROSS. By Anna Seghers. Little Brown & Company. \$2.50.

The novelist writing of the contemporary scene has a special advantage. The inevitable impact of events is fresh in the minds of his readers. It is not sufficient, however, to depend upon this actual drama to supply the emotional weather of the novel. The relations between human beings and their immediate history must be made clear within the frame of the book; the time must not only give importance to the characters, but the characters must make the time significant. The reader ought not to be required to contribute all the insight. The author who has disdained this responsibility has allowed his book to become a parasite of current events. As the events fade, the book's meaning recedes.

Both these novels suffer in some measure from this particular kind of unrealized opportunism, Miss Segher's more than Miss Boyle's. The other faults and virtues of the two books are of a completely different order, except for a similar singleness of vision, Miss Segher's directed outward, Miss Boyle's inward on her heroine.

Both have been called "great novels", both by their publishers, with their staffs of blurbists for whom enthusiasm is a profession, and by reviewers who find innumerable masterpieces on their desks each year. Miss Seghers has even, by the reviewer in *The Nation* been placed in a tête à tête with Thomas Mann, presumably on the strength of her previous works. Perhaps this is true, though on the basis of reading *The Seventh Cross*, it may be seriously doubted as an accurate judgment. It is as if one were to give Maxwell Anderson the same consideration as Shakespeare because he too writes blank verse. As for Miss Boyle, those who are familiar with her work know that she has, so far, given little indication of being able to write a "great" novel. This puts her in a numerous company, in which, to do

her justice, she is of the aristocracy, as far as literary craftsmanship goes. It is unfortunate that she has always let her craftsmanship run away with her, and her substance invariably suffers in comparison with her style. Her values are verbal, her morals mannered, and her fluent technique for searching out the emotions of her characters avails her little, since a fog of romantic feeling intervenes. What emerges is a series of expressive and self-conscious attitudes instead of honest and convincing passions and fears. This condemnation would hardly carry the harshness it does, if Miss Boyle were content to be a writer of fairy tales, cunningly devised and full of choice sensibility. She makes the error, however, of taking herself with such enormous seriousness that she almost always seems pretentious, and often even ridiculous.

Primer For Combat is the diary of the heroine, an American woman living in a small mountain village in France with her husband and several children, kept during the period immediately following the Nazi triumph in that country. This device of the diary (an excellent one for corraling a wide variety of otherwise apparently irrelevant observations and anecdotes into the focus of a single contemplation) is largely defeated by its literary qualities. It is too full of a feeling for the progress of a novel, the neatness of a scene, the closing phrase or perception that will best touch the imagination or most move the sensibility. It is so refined and glacé as to be a very parody of the diary. It is a diary written with both eyes on an audience and one hand on a contract. Even this would be acceptable as a literary convention if Miss Boyle did not give us, in such a guise of utter veracity, her usual overwrought heroine, here perhaps even more humorless than ever, who is willing, nay, anxious, to drop everything for the sake of her extra-marital Truelove, and through whose eyes all people behave in the *style* to which she is accustomed (whatever their sympathies), and for whom all events contrive to form a grand proscenium for her personal drama. This member of the smart international set, then, who sees everything in her own image, is the central intelligence of the

novel. In the village in which she lived, it would seem, all the roads led to Phyl's house, where her husband, Benchley, sat back and watched two out of every three men falling in love with her.

Miss Boyle is as much a virtuoso at sustaining intense emotion as she is at putting one word after another, which would be talent indeed, if so many of the emotions were not unhappily overcast with falsity. Perhaps it is not so much falsity, actually, as a continuous transposing into a single key all kinds of perceptions, all levels of feeling, so that when Miss Boyle notes that "a line of beer lay white along his lip," it appears as meaningful as the signs of repressed grief in the face of a Frenchman who has seen his people reconciling themselves to the Germans—"Something as crazy as tears stood in his eyes," she says, rather excessively. Miss Boyle's inability or unwillingness to restrain her over-weighted use of physical observation deprives her psychological penetration of much of its force. She takes too many unessential signs for emotional wonders; they are not inescapably related, and good as they may be in themselves, it is irritating to find them balanced with such mistaken nicety.

Miss Boyle's skill is certainly equal to that of Katherine Anne Porter's or Elizabeth Bowen's. She has both insight and wit to match theirs. What she lacks is their fibre and honesty. She is not *more* interested in the texture and dramatic quality of her prose; she is only more exclusively interested. She is merely effective where they are also affecting. For her there seems to be no ground between the mountains of exalted emotion. Joy and anguish rock her alternately, and while this makes for excitement it also makes one wonder about the valleys between these peaks. If she could persuade herself to be less desperate at times, her readers might be thankful for such relief. In this novel, which like her others is of the type that F. Cudworth Flint has called "the epistolatory novel, which moves from sentiment to sentiment," she has nevertheless made her most direct approach to the outside world.

The Seventh Cross suffers somewhat from being read after

Primer For Combat. Miss Boyle as a writer is far superior to Miss Seghers, whose prose is mainly distinguished for being straightforward and unpretentious. There are no chichi effects here, as there always are in Miss Boyle's work. The story is written from an apparently detached point of view, the range of reference is limited by its singleness of purpose, it is more homely and naturalistic, and the narrative proceeds from action to action, instead of, as in *Primer For Combat*, from reaction to reaction. The characters speak and behave in their everyday voices and manners; they do not perform for each other or beguile each other with eloquent and impassioned prose passages. This is a workmanlike book with no nonsense about it, no such charming digressions as are possible with the diary form. Miss Seghers is a sound artisan, whether or not she is an artist; she has the end in view all the time, and moves determinedly towards it.

As in *Primer For Combat*, the book is peopled with figures who represent the appeased, the doubtful, the reconciled, in conflict with those more intransigent, sturdy and right-minded souls who, in one way or another struggle to keep the idea of liberty. Miss Boyle overstates, and is too much interested in her characters as personalities; Miss Seghers understates and is too much interested in hers as types and symbols. Neither is sufficiently profound.

This story of the escape from a concentration camp of seven men, of whom all are quickly captured with the exception of the hero, an intent and stubborn fellow, might have been told in the straightforward manner of a thriller. This approach, in narrowing the line of narrative and suspense, might have resulted in a more exciting book, but Miss Seghers has sacrificed this easier excitement for a more substantial interest. Her book is a complicated structure of flashbacks, forward marches, sidesteps and encirclements. The reader is never, however, permitted to lose sight of the hero, by reason of his activating centricity, as in *Primer For Combat* one can never forget the heroine for her emotionalizing egocentricity. Miss Boyle picks up her people at

a particular time of their lives, *evokes* their pasts, and *suggests* their futures; Miss Seghers, dealing with less worldly and articulate people, has found it advisable to give her story a solidity and extension of meaning by examining her hero's history exhaustively, through the experiences of the people with whom he has worked and lived; his wife, her family, his sweetheart, friends, rivals and colleagues.

In each, the characters who are the mainsprings of the plot, so to speak, are the weakest. In *The Seventh Cross* the Nazi chieftains at the concentration camp are little more than caricatures; in *Primer For Combat* the lovers are exasperating and rather absurd.

In both books the idea and the details are superior to the whole fabric. Both should have been more important, considering the earnestness with which they were written, the experience from which they were drawn, and the fact of the authors' being on the side of the angels. It is a pity that they are not.

GERTRUDE BUCKMAN.

WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY

WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY. By John T. Whitaker. New York. MacMillan.
275 pp. 1943. \$2.75.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Congress of the United States repealed the law which prohibited the sending of American troops out of the Western Hemisphere. Very timely action, everyone will agree, which could hardly have been delayed much longer without endangering the Republic. Future students of American history will be astonished that such a law was on the books. Germany and Japan had plunged almost all of Europe, Asia and Africa into a terrible war. In America only the most naïve could doubt, or people with ulterior aims pretend to doubt, that an Axis victory would reduce the United States

to the status of a second class power, dependent entirely upon the good will of unsympathetic and unscrupulous competitors.

Mr. Whitaker's book is an excellent account of the events leading up to the war, and of the policy of appeasement which paralyzed the democracies. As Hitler threatened, the democracies grew more "astounded and inert." Democracy, it seemed, could not of its own volition gear itself for action. Mr. Whitaker quotes Hore Belisha: "In a democracy you can't take the initiative. You have to wait for your enemy to make moves until your people are aroused. . . ." The manner in which America was drawn into the war would seem to give point to this remark. But Mr. Whitaker would not admit that this impotence is inherent in the democratic system, and in his book there is a quiet pride in the fact that we have at last determined that Germany and Japan shall not write American history.

Mr. Whitaker indicts the appeasers of France and England, but he is equally critical of our own pre-war policy. It is natural for us to blame the British and the French for their failure to recognize and repress the Nazi menace, but there is more profit in studying our own mistakes. The French Chamber of Deputies in its lowest moment, he says, "never sank to the level of an American Congress which declined to fortify Guam and which agreed in 1941 to extend the selective service by the margin of only one vote." The French public was apathetic about preparing for war; "but had a French newspaper printed such articles and editorials as appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*, for instance—including the publication of military secrets,—a French mob would have smashed the printing presses and lynched the publishers."

Going back to the last war, Mr. Whitaker reminds us that our failure to ratify the Treaty of Versailles "looked like sharp practice, if not treachery, to most Europeans." Even after the rise of Hitler, though blaming the British and the French for their failure to act, we were ourselves equally unready and unwilling. What most Americans ignored was that without assurance of American support, the British and French felt powerless to stop

Hitler. "Continued American neutrality until Pearl Harbor," he says, "influenced French thinking more than anything done by Hitler and the German staff. . . . However sincere or well meaning they may have been, men like Lindbergh and Wheeler reconquered France for Germany," and strengthened Hitler's influence in Spain and Turkey. "Had these men worn the uniform of German field marshals they could have rendered Hitler no greater service."

Mr. Whitaker, we see, knows very well where to place the blame for America's blindness and inaction. He goes gunning for the isolationists, "misfits" who fell for the "wave of the future," reactionaries who hate their own government more than they hate Hitler. This last group, he suggests, was quite large in France. But France, too, had her isolationists, and it is astonishing to be told that too many French politicians were like Senator Borah. Since the "psychology" of men like Borah is responsible for so much today, it is not profitless to quote this question asked at the time of his death: "What were Borah's first words to Henry Cabot Lodge?"

Sentimentalists who go into ecstacy over the German "soul" and who yell about the iniquities of the Versailles Treaty will get no comfort from Mr. Whitaker. He suggests that they contrast the Franco-German Armistice of 1940 with the reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty. Under the Dawes and Young plans, the Germans were required to pay France the sum of 10,000,000,000 marks. Actually "they paid less than half of that sum and virtually every German payment came out of the yield of loans which the democracies pumped into Germany. Ears still ring with the German wails. From 1924 to 1931 the Germans paid to France—whose lands had been devasted by German occupation—a total of only 4,000,000,000 marks in reparations. For the first two years of the occupation of France the Germans have collected from the French the sum of 4,000,000,000 marks every six months."

The humanitarian approach, the appeaser's approach, subsidies to gain good will, treaties to renounce war, all are alike

irrelevant and ineffectual. "Freedom from recurrent war," says Mr. Whitaker, "depends ultimately upon the maturity and political wisdom of the American people." As the most powerful and most progressive nation of the world, we must accept our responsibilities. "If we can turn our backs resolutely on a century of isolationism . . . we can create an enduring peace." It is simply not true that war never settles anything, but neither is it true that all wars are necessary and inevitable. An enlightened public opinion, alert and impelling its government to timely action, can do much to eliminate war.

We Cannot Escape History has a sound thesis, as indicated by the title of the last chapter: "Can the Isolationists Learn?" Incidentally, it gives some comfort to the people who used to be called warmongers. As Mr. Whitaker says, "hind sight is better than no sight at all." But perhaps the most interesting aspect of the book is the excellent reporting, here raised to the level of a fine art. The account of the Nazi blood purge, the picture of Hitler, hysterical when stared down by Roehm, the morose and sensual Mussolini, the tragedy of the Spanish Loyalists, that night in Prague waiting for the Germans, Plymouth under the bombs—these will long remain in the reader's memory.

ABBOTT MARTIN.

BOOKS RECEIVED

PSALMS FOR A LATE SEASON. By Judson C. Crews. New Orleans: The Iconograph Press. 1942. 12pp. Price not indicated.

SMALL RAIN. By Joseph Cherwinski. New Orleans: The Iconograph Press. 1942. 12pp. Price not indicated.

INCUNABULA AND OTHER POEMS. By Kenneth Lawrence Beaudoin. New Orleans: The Iconograph Press. 1942. 23pp. Price not indicated.

AMERICAN IDEALISM. By Floyd Stovall. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1943. 235pp. \$2.75.

A. T. ROBERTSON: A Biography. By Everett Gill. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1943. 250pp. \$2.50.

THE THEME OF DIVORCE IN AMERICAN DRAMA: A Dissertation for the doctorate, University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: privately printed. 1942. 117pp. Price not indicated.

PATHEtic FALLACY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By Josephine Mills. University of California Publications in English, Vol. 12, No. 2 Berkeley: University of California Press 1942. 304pp. Price not indicated.

SYNTHETIC ELEMENTS OF WAR. By I. J. Alexander. New York; The Mocking Bird Press. 1943. 50pp. \$1.00.

LIVING UPSTAIRS: READING FOR PROFIT AND PLEASURE. By Francis Meehan. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1942. 256pp. \$2.50.

ANTHOLOGY OF CANADIAN POETRY (English). Compiled by Ralph Gustafson. Toronto and New York: Penguin Books, Ltd. 123pp. Price not indicated.

RETURN TO THE FOUNTAINS. By John Paul Pritchard. Durham: Duke University Press. 271pp. \$3.00.

BOUND FOR GLORY. By Woody Guthrie. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1943. 428pp. \$3.00.

THE LAND OF COTTON AND OTHER PLAYS. By Randolph Edmonds. Washington, D. C.: The Associated Publishers, Inc. 1942. 267pp. \$3.25.

THE BACKGROUND OF THOMSON'S SEASONS. By Alan Dugald McKillop. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. 1942. 191pp. \$2.50.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA. By David A. Lockmiller. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1942. 160pp. \$3.00 in boards, \$2.00 in paper cover.

SOUTHERN SIDELIGHTS. By Rev. William E. Cox. Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Co. 1942. 170pp. \$2.00.

THE CLUBS OF THE GEORGIAN RAKES. By Louis C. Jones. New York: Columbia University Press. 1942. 259pp. \$2.75.

GUIDE TO LIFE AND LITERATURE OF THE SOUTHWEST. By J. Frank Dobie. Austin: The University of Texas Press; special printing for the University Press in Dallas, Southern Methodist University. Not copyrighted. 1941. 111pp. \$2.50.

NEW WORLD CONSTITUTIONAL HARMONY: A PAN-AMERICANIAN PANORAMA. By George Jaffin. New York: Columbia Law Review. 1942. 53pp.

TENNYSON IN EGYPT: A STUDY OF THE IMAGERY IN HIS EARLIER WORK. By W. D. Paden. Lawrence: University of Kansas Publication. 1942. 178pp.

COLERIDGE AND THE BROAD CHURCH MOVEMENT. By Charles Richard Sanders. Durham: Duke University Press. 1942. 307pp. \$3.50.

ALFRED NOBEL: DYNAMITE KING: ARCHITECT OF PEACE. By Herta E. Pauli. New York: L. B. Fischer. 1942. 325pp. \$3.00.

JEWS IN A GENTILE WORLD. By Isacque Graeber and Steuart Henderson in cooperation with many others. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1942. 436pp. \$4.00.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ROBERT PENN WARREN's novel, *At Heaven's Gate*, will be published by Harcourt, Brace in May. His *Understanding Fiction*, written in collaboration with Cleanth Brooks, came out in the early spring. R. P. BLACKMUR is now at Princeton, as a member of the Creative Arts program. His books on Henry James and Henry Adams are nearing completion. HARRY M. CAMPBELL has written essays and book reviews for the *Southwest Review* and the *Dallas Morning News*. He is an instructor in English at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. RANDALL JARRELL'S most recent publication is *Blood For A Stranger*. This book of verse will be reviewed in the summer issue of the *Sewanee Review*. R. M. WEAVER teaches at Louisiana State University; SOLOMON FISHMAN is a member of the Department of English of the University of California at Berkeley, California. S. T. CLARK is an officer in the Marine Corps, now attached to the general staff at Washington. THOMAS HAILE is first of all a poet, but he has written articles on the Southern agrarian tradition. WILLIAM ARROWSMITH is editor of *The Chimera* and was included in Allen Tate's *Princeton Verse Between Two Wars*. NANCY SHANKLAND was educated at the University of Texas and lives in Austin, Texas. JOHN EDWARD HARDY lives in New Orleans, Louisiana. ABBOTT MARTIN is professor of English at The University of the South. GERTUDE BUCKMAN, (Mrs. Delmore Schwartz) lives in Cambridge, Mass.

352

by Allen Tate

DOSTOEVSKY'S HOVERING FLY¹

A CAUSERIE ON THE IMAGINATION AND THE ACTUAL WORLD

I

OF the three great novels of Dostoevsky *The Idiot* has perhaps the simplest structure. In the center of the action there are only three characters. The development of the plot is almost exclusively "scenic" or dramatic; that is to say, a succession of scenes with episodic climaxes leads, with more than Dostoevsky's usual certainty of control, to the catastrophe at the end. There is very little summary or commentary by the author; here and there a brief lapse of time is explained, or there is a "constatation," a pause in the action in which the author assumes the omniscient view and reminds us of the position and plight of the other characters, who are complicating the problem of the hero. I emphasize here the prevailing scenic method because at the catastrophe the resolution of the dramatic forces is not a statement about life, or even about the life that we have seen in this novel: the resolution is managed by means of that most difficult of all feats, a narrow scene brought close up, in which the "meaning" of the action is conveyed in a dramatic visualization so immediate and intense that it creates its own symbolism. And it is the particular symbolism of the fly in the final scene of *The Idiot* which has provided the spring-board, or let us say the catapult, that will send us off into the unknown regions of "actuality," into which we have received orders to advance.

¹Read at Princeton University, April 8, as one of the Mesures Lectures for 1943. The general subject of the four lectures was "Poetry and the Actual World."

What is *The Idiot* about? In what I have said so far I have purposely evaded any description of the novel; I have not tried to distinguish the experience which it offers, a kind of experience that might start a wholly different train of speculation upon actuality from that which will be our special concern in these notes. But now, before we get into the last scene, where the three main characters find themselves in a dark room, alone for the first time, we must drop them, and go a long way round and perhaps lose our way on a road that has no signs at the forks to tell us which turn to take.

II

When we say poetry *and* something else—poetry and science, poetry and morality, or even poetry and mathematics—it makes little difference in dialectical difficulty what the coördinate field may be: all problems are equally hard and in the end they are much the same. The problem that I shall skirt around in these notes is a very old one, going back to the first records of critical self-consciousness. Aristotle was aware of it when he said that poetry is more philosophical than history. Although the same quagmire awaits us from whatever direction we come upon it, the direction itself and the way we tumble into the mud remain very important. Perhaps the crucial value of the critical activity—given the value of the directing mind, a factor that “systematic” criticism cannot find—will be set up or cast down by the kind of tact that we can muster for the “approach,” a word that holds out to us a clue.

Armies used to besiege towns by “regular approaches”; or they took them by direct assault; or they manoeuvred the enemy out of position, perhaps into ambuscade. These strategies are used today, for in war as in criticism the new is usually merely a new name for something very old. When Caesar laid waste the country he was using a grand tactics that we have recently given a new name: infiltration, or the tactics of getting effectively into the enemy’s rear. When you have total war must you also have total criticism? In our time critics are supposed to know every-

thing, and we get criticism on all fronts. Does this not outmode the direct assault? When there are so many "problems" (a term equally critical and military) you have got to do a little here and a little there, and you may not be of the command that enters the suburbs of Berlin.

At any rate the world outside poetry, which continues to disregard the extent that it is also *in* poetry, resists and eludes our best understanding. When and why did it begin to behave in this way? When we had the Truce of God for three days a week, we attacked, with a great deal of military rhetoric and pageantry, the enemy, on the fourth day, and the attack was a frontal assault; both sides knew the rules. But we do not know them. And in the critical manual of war there has been nothing comparable to the rules since Arnold's doctrine of the "criticism of life" could still engage the non- or anti-poetic forces of the world head on.

But suppose there isn't an enemy? Suppose the war figure is misleading? Henry James (one of the great critics) wrote to Stevenson in 1891 that "No theory is kind to us that cheats us of seeing." What did he mean? In this instance he meant Stevenson's refusal to visualize his scene. "It struck me," says James, "that you either didn't feel—through some accident—your responsibility on this article quite enough; or, on some theory of your own, had declined it." We know that Stevenson did have a theory that made him generalize his scenes.

It is not necessary to find out here what Stevenson missed, or what, missing that, he did actually succeed in seeing. Every imaginative writer has a theory, whether he recognize it or not; it may operate for him at some dynamic level where it can liberate all that writer's power; but in so far as it participates in the exclusive nature of theory, it must entail upon some phase of his work very great risks, even perils. "Thus Hardy," says William Empson, "is fond of showing us an unusually stupid person subjected to very unusually bad luck, and then a moral is drawn, not merely by inference but by solemn assertion, that we are all in the same boat as this person whose story is striking precisely because it is unusual." The "solemn assertion" in Hardy and in

many other writers, critics no less than novelists and poets, must always either limit or somehow illegitimately extend what the writer has actually seen.

What I want to end these beginning remarks with is an observation that has been too little acknowledged. The art of criticism must inevitably partake of the arts on which it lives, and in a very special and niggling way. I refer to the "approach," the direction of attack, the strategy; and in terms of the strategy of this occasion, I mean the "point of view," as Percy Lubbock understands that phrase when he tells us that very nearly the whole art of fiction is in it. From what position shall the critic, who is convinced that the total view is no view at all, the critic not being God, and convinced too that even if (which is impossible) he see everything, he has got to see it from somewhere, like the painter Philippoteaux who placed himself under a tree in his picture of the Battle of Gettysburg to warn you that what you see is only what he sees, under that tree: under what tree, then, or from what hill, or under what log or leaf, shall the critic take his stand, which may be less than an heroic stand, to report what he sees, infers, or merely guesses? Merely to ask this question is enough to indicate something of the post which I am trying to find and hold. You may locate it far to the sinister side of the line which divides the arts and the sciences. Even if this spectator succeeds in holding his ground, you may be sure that he will not be able to give you a scientific report.

III

Suppose we take two terms and relate them. The two terms for this occasion are, first, Poetry, and, second, the Actual World. Do we mean then by the actual world a world distinguished from one which is less actual or not actual at all? I suppose we mean both things; else we should say: Poetry and the World. We might again alter the phrase and get: Poetry and Actuality, which by omitting the world would give us a clue to its bearing in the preceding phrase; that is, world might then mean region, realm,

field of observation or experience. So I take it that the bearing of the phrase "actual world" is towards something outside us, something objective, whose actuality is somehow an empirical one which tends to look after its own affairs without consulting us, and even at times resisting whatever it is in us which we like to call by names like subjective, private, human as opposed to non-human, although even the human and the subjective lie ready for objective scrutiny if we change our vantage-point and let them stand opposite us rather than let them oppose a third thing, a world, beyond them. It is, in fact, no mere quibble of idealism if we decide to call this subjective field not only the world but the actual world, taking our stand on the assumption that it sufficiently reflects or gathers in or contains all that we can ever know of any other world or worlds that appear to lie beyond it.

Are we prepared to take this stand? Perhaps we are if we are philosophers of a certain logical stubbornness; but as poets our zeal for subjectivism might seem to be good only at times, at certain places and moments. And are we, here in this kind of enquiry, either philosophers or poets? To ask that question is to diminish or perhaps to reduce to zero any degree of confidence that we may have enjoyed in trying to sort out, however provisionally, some of the bearings of our phrase "actual world." When we are sorting them out are we outside them, or inside, or partly inside and partly outside?

If we go back for another glimpse of a suggestion that I merely threw down at the outset of this discussion, we shall drop to a degree somewhere below zero in our confidence of certainty in this enquiry. From what position is the critic looking at the object of his enquiry? That was our suggestion, but we have now identified the critic's object as the actual world, whatever that is, as that world is related to poetry, whatever that is.

If I seem to be making this matter obscure, let me plead my ignorance, and if you will, add your own ignorance to my plea; or if you like it better, add your scepticism to mine; and we shall examine together our riddle, so far as we can, as if nobody had

seen it before: which, I take it, is the *action* of scepticism as distinguished from the mere feeling of the sceptic.

I suppose the easiest and, for all I know, the best way to establish our post of observation to look at the actual world, under our given condition, is to look at it through poetry. But here again we encounter difficulties as harassing as those we almost had to give up when we plumped ourselves down into the actual world. Even if we knew what poetry is, we should have to find it in particular poetic works: you see in that abstract phrase—particular poetic works—how difficult it is to face the paralyzing simplicity of our problem at this stage. We should have to find poetry in poems. Does not that make it look easier? It does, until we remember that even the man who may have read five thousand poems, an anthologist, for example, could lay claim to real mastery of not more than a few hundred.

What, then, is poetry? The innocence of the question ought to excuse it. Were we German idealists of the past century, or their disciples of today, we might easily begin poetry with a capital P, and putting initial capitals before actual and world, start Poetry and the Actual World off on their historic merry-go-round; or perhaps Poetry could pursue the Actual World as the Lord, in the Gullah sermon, chased Adam and Eve “round and round dat Gyarden, round and round;” or again there are the standard clowns in the bestiary of the animated cartoon that chase each other’s tail until at last all that is left on the screen is a whirling vortex. Any of these similes will do that testifies to our helplessness before the fenced-in apriorism of the merely philosophical approach: its conclusions are impressive and are usually stated at length, but I have never seen one of them that increased my understanding of the XXVIIIth Canto of the *Paradiso*, or even of *Locksley Hall*.

But if we cannot say philosophically what poetry is, or even how it functions, how shall we know from any point of view what post of observation we are taking when we decide to look at the actual world through poetry? From now on this is what I

shall be trying to get at. We shall certainly not be looking on as a spectator who has no stake in the scene; and yet to say that as a man who has written verse I have a special tact which will lead me to the right hill and turn my eyes in the right direction smacks a little of our national reliance upon expert testimony. For even if a poet, some other poet, seems in his verse to have given us flashes of what we may provisionally call actuality, he is not, as he talks about poetry, inside his verse, but outside it; and his report is as much under the obligation to make good as yours.

IV.

I am sorry to introduce another complication before we go further. I must introduce a broader term, and the broader term usually lifts the spirits for a brief span, until somebody reminds us that it may be an evasion of the harder distinctions enjoined by the narrower term. The broader term is Imagination. If we say that we are trying to discover the relation between the Imagination and the Actual World, we find ready to run to our aid a host of comforting saws that could easily turn this vacillating discourse into an oration—and may actually do so before we are done. The Imagination is superior to Reality. Imagination is the rudder, Fancy the sails. Imagination is the esemplastic power. There are others as good, perhaps even better; and I do not deny the probability that before I am through I shall have spoken in substance one of these doctrines.

Yet I have brought in the Imagination for a more empirical reason. The great prose dramatists and novelists are makers and thus poets, and they give us something that is coherent and moving about human life which partakes of actuality but which is not actuality as it is reported to me by my senses as I look about me at a given moment. How does their report differ from mine? How does it differ from the report of the poet who writes, either lyrically or dramatically, in verse? Perhaps we had better take the risk and decide that the two reports seem to differ, verse being the occasion of the difference but not its

explanation; and yet bearing in mind a few of the examples and comparisons which I shall produce or refer to in a few minutes, I make a large reservation about a categorical difference between the imagination in prose and the imagination in verse: Whether verse be expressive or formal in its function, it nevertheless becomes a sort of medium through which the poet may convey a deeper and wider heterogeneity of material than the prose vehicle will ordinarily carry. My reservation about this difference simply acknowledges the probability that it may be only a difference of degree, of intensity, of scope, with respect to the material; or if it is a real distinction, it cannot be said to hold all the time, but only as a rule. I admire, for example, the late Robert Bridges' poetry, but I see in it a failure or, if you will, a refusal to go all the way for as much of the richness of image as his magnificent control of verse-technique would have justified. On the other hand, if you will recall the cutting up of the whale in *Moby Dick* you will see at once the long reach of a prose style that is probably richer and more fluent than any verse style of its century, and far more dynamic than the style of *Dawn in Britain*, which perhaps alone in nineteenth-century poetry equals *Moby Dick* in rhetorical ambition. Bridges and Melville, then, might be seen as the exceptions in their respective mediums; and yet, in order to see them that way, we should have to establish a middle point at which the prose imagination and the verse imagination pass each other on the way to their proper extremes; and no such point exists except in books on the differential calculus.

But if we look at this matter empirically, not claiming too much for any differences or for our more confident distinctions, we may succeed in taking up an attitude towards a very real problem; for I take it that nobody denies the value of what seems to go on in sound works of the imagination. In what respects does this value belong to an actual world? In that spirit, we may phrase the question more narrowly, even finically, and ask it in terms of motion, or process, or as Mr. Kenneth Burke would have

it, of drama. In what ways, then, does an actual world *get into* the imagination?

Thus I turn to another line of speculation, with an observation that ought to arrest some of the vacillation of my opening trial flights, and at the same time fix our point of view. If we think of the actual world as either a dead lump or a whirling wind somewhere outside us, against which we bump our heads or which whirls us around, we shall never be able to discover it: we have got to try to find it in terms of one of our chief interests. Let us call that interest the imagination.

V

There is now raging in one of our best journals a controversy about a human crisis which the editors of that journal call "The Failure of Nerve." The full implications of the controversy are irrelevant to the end of my discussion; yet there is one issue, perhaps the central issue, of that controversy which may instruct us, or at any rate prepare us for what follows. Professors Dewey, Hook, and Nagel are anxious and at moments even a little angry about the disorderly rebirth of certain beliefs about man that tend to reject scientific positivism and the reliance upon what they, in their tradition of thought, are pleased to call reason. The answers to these challenging blasts are scarcely developed; the editors of *Partisan Review* have so far relegated them to their correspondence columns; and I do not know whether or not there will be more considered replies. As an old anti-positivist I cannot do less than to point out a standard objection to the positivist program, reminding its adherents that our supposed "failure of nerve" might actually turn out to be the positivists' failure to allow for all that our nerve-ends are capable of taking in.

The positivist program for the complete government of man may perhaps be a form of what Scott Buchanan has called "occultation," a term that I should apply to positivism somewhat as follows: Positivism offers us a single field of discourse which may be briefly labelled as physicalism; and it pretends that this is the

sole field of discourse, all the others being illusion, priestcraft, superstition, or even Nazism. Now as this single field of discourse is directed towards works of the imagination it carries with it a certain test of validity, which is usually the semantical test; and I hold that when this test becomes the pragmatic test and usurps the business of other tests, from other fields of discourse, pretending to be the sole test, it is performing an act of occultation upon those tests—a hiding away, an ascription of dark motives, even an imputation of black art.

Is there failure of nerve in a recognition of the failure of positivism even at its crudest level to deliver all the goods? Are men the victims of a failure of nerve if, standing on a precipice from which there is no retreat, they prepare to make the best jump possible, and refuse to mumble to themselves that their fall will only exemplify the laws of gravity? There is no doubt that the fall will offer this confirmation of positivism; for positivism is a highly efficient technique of our physical necessities; it is the creation of the practical reason which organizes our physical economy, without which we cannot live. But under the rule of a positivism which has become a group of self-sufficient sciences, the organization has grown exclusive. What is it that is excluded? What is *occulted*?

There are two answers to this question which are two ways of giving the same answer. But before I try to give this single-double answer I ought to say that my purpose here is not to berate the sciences but only the positivist religion of scientists. I am even more concerned with what it leaves out, or at least to "point" towards that omitted thing, as one nods in the direction of a good landscape which one might have missed, driving by it at seventy miles an hour.

What is excluded, what is occulted? First, the actual world; second, Dostoevsky's hovering fly; I shall be saying presently that in terms of the dramatic imagination the world and the fly are the same thing. Our scepticism—and as I say it I have my own doubt—our doubt of this identification proceeds from what we

ordinarily call our common sense, a good thing to have, but not good enough if it is all we have. Let me put the matter somewhat differently. We may *look* at the hovering fly; we can to a degree *know* the actual world. But we shall not know the actual world by looking at it; we know it by looking at the hovering fly.

I am sorry that this sounds a little gnomic; and it is time to remember James' remark again: No theory is kind to us that cheats us of seeing. But it is also time to amend James: No theory is kind to us that cheats us of seeing what path we ought to be on. What is our path? When we do not know, we may get a vision, and then hope that all visions appear on the road to Damascus. Before we may build our hope so high we had better confront Pascal: "We run carelessly to the precipice, after we have put something before us to prevent us seeing it."

VI

The fly appears out of nowhere in the last scene in *The Idiot*: out of nowhere, but only if we limit our apperception of place to the scale of the human will. There are, as I have said, three persons in the scene, but one of them is dead, and her place is taken by the hovering fly. Nastasya Filippovna has appeared less directly in the action than other women characters of the story; but she is the heroine; for it is she who creates for the hero his insoluble problem. She is a beautiful and gifted orphan of good family who has been seduced by her guardian, a libertine of high political and social connections at the court. There is Rogozhin, who, as the story opens, has just inherited a fortune; he is in love with Nastasya and he offers her the worldly solution of money and marriage, a solution that she will not accept; and it is he, of course, who murders her at the end, since in no other way may he possess her. From the beginning Prince Myshkin, our hero, has been in his special way in love with Nastasya. He is the "idiot," the man whom epilepsy has removed from the world of action. I am not prepared to add to our critical knowledge of Myshkin. He has a marvellous detachment and receptivity,

and a profundity of insight into human motives which I believe nobody but Dostoevsky has ever succeeded so perfectly in rendering dramatically. (It is always easy for the novelist to say that a character is profound; it is quite another matter to dramatize the profundity, to make it *act*.) Nastasya's agony of guilt, the conviction of sin, mirrors an almost Christ-like perception of the same potentialities on the part of Myshkin; and it is Nastasya who creates Myshkin's problem. Nastasya is tortured by those oscillating extremes, personal degradation and nobility of motive; and Myshkin alone in his world knows that she is not a "bad woman." But she will not marry Myshkin either. Marriage to Myshkin would be the symbolic signal that the pressure of her conflict had abated, and that Myshkin's problem had found solution in Nastasya's solution of her own. She cannot marry Rogozhin because she is too noble; she cannot marry Myshkin because she is too degraded. Thus we get in Rogozhin's murder of Nastasya the deeply immoral implications of Rogozhin's character, and the dramatically just irony of the good in her being destroyed by the lover who was indifferent to it. When the murder is done, Myshkin feels no resentment: he can accept that too. The lovers stand over the dead body of the murdered girl:

[Myshkin's] eyes were by now accustomed to the darkness, so that he could make out the whole bed. Some one lay asleep on it, in a perfectly motionless sleep; not the faintest stir, nor the faintest breath could be heard. The sleeper was covered from head to foot with a white sheet and the limbs were vaguely defined; all that could be seen was that a human figure lay there, stretched at full length. All around in disorder at the foot of the bed, on chairs beside it, and even on the floor, clothes had been flung in disorder; a rich white silk dress, flowers, and ribbons. On a little table at the head of the bed there was the glitter of diamonds that had been taken off and thrown down. At the end of the bed there was a crumpled heap of lace and on the white lace the toes of a bare foot peeped out from under the sheet; it seemed as though it had been carved out of marble and it was horribly still. Myshkin looked and felt that as he looked, the room became more and more still and death-

like. Suddenly there was the buzz of a fly which flew over the bed and settled on the pillow.

I assume that the minimum of exposition is necessary; it is one of the great and famous scenes of modern literature; and I hope that seeing it again you recalled the immense drama preceding it and informing it and stretching the tensions which are here let down, eased, and resolved for us. I am not sure that the power of the scene would be diminished by the absence of the fly; but at any rate it is there; and its buzz rises like a hurricane in that silent room, until, for me, the room is filled with audible silence. The fly comes to stand in its sinister and abundant life for the privation of life, the body of the young woman on the bed. Here we have one of those conversions of image of which only great literary talent is capable: life stands for death, but it is a wholly different order of life, and one that impinges upon the human order only in its capacity of scavenger, a necessity of its biological situation which in itself must be seen as neutral or even innocent. Any sinister significance that the fly may create in us is entirely due to its crossing our own path: by means of the fly the human order is compromised. But it is also extended, until through a series of similar conversions and correspondences of image the buzz of the fly distends, both visually and metaphorically, the body of the girl into the world. Her degradation and nobility are in that image. Shall we call it the actual world?

Or is there another adjective that we could apply to this world? There doubtless is; but I cannot, for my purpose, find it short of an adjectival essay, which this essay largely is, of another sort. With some propriety we might call it *an* actual world, which resembles other worlds equally actual, like Dante's or some of Shakespeare's, in its own final completeness, its coherence, depth, perspective. Yet I suspect that this side of the very great men we seldom get magnitude with actuality. We get magnitude in Thackeray and actuality in James; but not both in either. We get both in Tolstoy; but I take it that we accept his

magnitude because it is actual, not because it is large. Thackeray's hurly-burly over the Battle of Waterloo is pleasant, empty, and immemorable; Prince André lying wounded under the infinite sky is all the world so lying; and we suspect that Tolstoy's magnitude is only a vast accumulation of little actualities—young Rostov on his horse at the bridgehead, the "little uncle" serving tea to the young people, Natasha weeping over Anatol in her room.

Whither do these casual allusions take us? They might take us far, on some other occasion, at a time when we had the heart for the consideration of actual worlds. But now we are in an occult world, from which actualities, which in their nature are quiet and permanent, are hard to find. As we face the morning's world we see nothing, unless we have the peculiar though intermittent talent for it, so actual as Dostoevsky's fly or Prince André's empty heavens. For if the drift of this essay have anything of truth in it, then our daily suffering, our best will towards the world in which we with difficulty breathe today, and our secret anxieties, however painful these experiences may be, must have something of the occult, something of the private, even something of the wilful and obtuse, unless by a miracle of gift or character, or perhaps of history also, we command the imaginative power of the relation of things.

VII

It is a gift that comes and goes; its story is so long that neither time nor understanding has permitted me to tell it here. Yet I think that the risk, the extreme risk that I have so far faced, of some general commitments concerning the function of the imagination as a black art will be worth taking, if only to challenge a fierce denial. It ought to be plain to us, who share a common experience of two conflicts in a single war and who continue to wonder at the ingenious failure of our time, that although human powers are by no means depleted, something has gone wrong with their direction. No man but ac-

knowledges this commonplace; yet how shall we imbed it, ground it, in some conceivable knowledge of the actuality of a world?

It must be plain also that the very instruments of our daily economy have more and more dictated our ends, or at best have suggested to an obscure power within us how we shall conduct our lives. The possibilities latent in our situation must make us falter. The obscure power within us we have made into an occult power; we are no longer conscious of its limits, its function, its purposes. Is that not the meaning of an occult power? One that we sway under but cannot know?

Here again I come up against formidable hazards, and I feel as if I had gone round the flank only to lose direction and to be cut off; but these perils will be plain enough although I shall not describe them. This occult power that seems to overwhelm us must, in times past, have enjoyed the fulness of light; but even underground it will not be gainsaid. If it does not have the privilege of its rational place in the order of human experience, it will take irrational toll of that order. Human violence is an historical constant; yet how shall we come to terms with a violence that is rationally implemented, an efficient, a total violence? It seems to me that the answer of our time to this problem is at present the historical answer of the dead-end, of the stalemate, of the facile optimism of decay. In a time like ours you may be sure of this: that men will be easy and hopeful, and will try a little of the medicine of the bridge-expert along with the elixirs of the innumerable Gerald Heards. Why? Because, although historically man may be a social being before he is a religious being, he is, after he achieves society, primarily religious, and remains incurably so. If he is told that mere "operational techniques" will see him through, whether these are put to work in society, or in the laboratory, or in industry, or in the arts, he may believe it for a while, and try to realize it; but like a child after the game is over and the fingers are uncrossed, he will return to the real world, unprepared and soon

to be overwhelmed by it, because he has been told that the real world does not exist.

Or perhaps you would prefer to call it merely another world, after the analogy of *an* actual world; not *the* other world and *the* actual world. For there must be a great many of these worlds, all actual, all to be participated in, all participating in us; yet I prefer the frank Platonism of *the* actual world, as Socrates himself preferred it when he told Ion that "poetry is one." And the impulse to reality which drives us through the engrossing image to the rational knowledge of our experience which, without that image, is mere process, must also be one. Once more the professed sceptic of thirty minutes ago reaches an immoderate deduction beyond any preparation that he has been able to ground it in.

For I should be chagrined could I feel that I have carried you, as well as myself, beyond known depths: are we not committed to the affirmation that actuality and poetry are respectively and even reciprocally one? If we are so committed, we must not affirm otherwise of humanity, which has been one from the beginning. And we cannot allow any novelty to our attempted insights.

Are we not saying something very old when we assert that we may know an actual world in the act of seeing the hovering fly? We are saying that our minds move through three necessities which, when in proper harmony and relation, achieve a dynamic and precarious unity of experience. Now that our oration is over I may say quite plainly that the three necessities—necessities at any rate for Western man—are the three liberal arts. And any one of them practiced to the exclusion of the others retires a portion of our experience into the shadows of the occult, the contingent, the uncontrolled. The grammarians of the modern world have allowed their specialization, the operational technique, to drive the two other arts to cover, whence they break forth in their own furies, the one the fury of irresponsible abstraction, the other the fury of irresponsible

rhetoric. The philosopher serves the operational technique, whether in the laboratory or on the battlefield. The poet—and the poet is the rhetorician, the specialist in symbol—serves the operational technique because, being the simplest mind of his trinity, his instinct is to follow and to be near his fellow men.

In a last glance at the last scene of *The Idiot* let us imagine that Myshkin and Rogozhin do not appear. The body of Nastasya Filippovna lies indefinitely upon the narrow bed, the white toe exposed, the fly intermittently rising and falling over the corpse. The dead woman and the fly are a *locus* of the process of decomposition. But, of course, we cannot imagine it, unless like a modern positivist we can imagine ourselves out of our humanity; for to imagine the scene is to be there, and to be there, before the sheeted bed, is to have our own interests powerfully affected. The fiction that we are neither here nor there, but are only spectators who, by becoming, ourselves, objects of grammatical analysis, can arrive at some other actuality than that of process, is the great modern heresy: we can never be mere spectators, or if we can for a little time we shall probably, a few of us only, remain, until there is one man left, like a solitary carp in a pond, who has devoured all the others.

by Harry Slochower

MARCEL PROUST

REVOLT AGAINST THE TYRANNY OF TIME

"We can deliver ourselves from all suffering just as well through present objects as through distant ones whenever we raise ourselves to a purely objective contemplation of them and so are able to bring about the illusion that only the objects are present and not we ourselves."

SCHOPENHAUER

"I feel that there is much to be said for the Celtic belief that the souls of those whom we have lost are held captive in some inferior being, in an animal, in a plant, in some inanimate object, and so effectively lost to us until the day (which to many never comes) when we happen to pass by the tree or to obtain possession of the object which forms their prison. Then they start and tremble, they call us by our name, and as soon as we have recognized their voice the spell is broken. We have delivered them: they have overcome death and return to share our life."

PROUST

GOETHE had hailed time as "a gift of God," liberating man from sleepy substances. To the *transition* group, about a century later, time had become "a tyranny to be abolished." Even Goethe did not save his *Faust* by way of temporal progress alone. The Catholic framework of *Faust's Assumption* suggested his need of grace for his sometime confusion between history and God. Schopenhauer denied the possibility of progress altogether. He saw time as the vessel of a devilish Will, harassing the body and mind, and he urged its "abolition" through esthetic and ethical identification. A generation later, Nietzsche appeared to acknowledge the idea of historical progress. But in his theory of recurrence, Nietzsche confessed the need of a time-

less order. Nietzsche's dialectic compensation was a foreshadowing of similar reservations by subsequent writers. In the post-war period the notion that the temporal process in itself provided meaning and value has come to be almost universally questioned.

The principle of dialectic compensation works, however, in both directions. If historical forms can not be equated with primary categories, neither can the compulsions of temporal forces be ignored. In one form or another, the heresy of process thinking infiltrates into the patterns of essence-frames.

In Proust, the mixture of tradition and change is grounded in his personal biography. Proust was brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, but his mother was Jewish. The elegant circle of the Faubourg Saint-Germain accepted him, but with reservations. After his mother's death, Proust became an invalid confined to his cork-lined room and cut off from the present as well as any future forms it was bringing forth. The past to which his realm of experience was limited came to constitute his world as a whole. Proust tended to identify this world with his mother. Her Jewish descent generally imposed a mediative rôle upon her, and in Proust's own life the mother was the link between himself and his father. In identifying himself with his mother, Proust was pledged towards such mediation himself. His work, as a whole, was to become an artistic mediation among the disparate forces of his experience. Physically excluded from the world of his mother, he was to return to it by picturing it in its essential forms, undisturbed as he now was by the vicissitudes of history. In the free time granted him by his illness, Proust labored to recapture his pre-natal essence. At the end, however, he was to admit that such pure regression which would exclude the time process was not possible.

The French title *A La Recherche Du Temps Perdu* indicates Proust's two-fold aim: to present time as Lost and time as Regained. With Bergson, Proust was persuaded that the intellectual faculty could not catch the irreversible nature of time. In the dream process, however, the past is also present in that the

I merges with its own and its communal history. In the dream, we get to know what is not known through discursive reasoning. It brings us knowledge on a two-fold plane. On the one hand, events appear as discontinuous with the law of causality apparently suspended. Here, time may be said to be lost. On the other hand, the very disconnected sequence hides a secret continuity which, once seen, reveals the mnemonic connections among the disassociated parts. It is then that we have caught the essence of things and have regained time.

Proust's technique corresponds to this dual facet. He employs an analytical impressionism which shows the nobility of the Faubourg Saint-Germain in the process of dissolution and falling apart. It no longer possesses its former daylight stability and now goes to bed early. Proust's impressionism is the reverse of that practised by the painters of the pre-war era. These worked outdoors and aimed at breaking up an old substance by the *introduction* of light. Proust himself worked in a room from which light was barred and he shows us his objects at sunset, by moonlight, or within closed doors as though seen through a magic lantern. His method is to exclude or break up light. His art is a kind of Debussy-esque color symphony which conjures up the liquid sequence of sleep and dream. The colors split and merge, producing a shifting kaleidoscope. Proust repeats the technique of Strindberg, Schnitzler, Hauptmann, Joyce and others who likewise suggest the passing of an epoch through dream-regression. The decomposition of the Faubourg Saint-Germain which Balzac had begun to show is completed by Proust. Its people now live on a horizontal, esthetic plane, and their feudal castle is a ruin. They are in the stage of appearance, forced to have recourse to twilight methods to produce the illusion of their former glamour.

But by abrogating time and space the dream also brings us the essence, shows us the castle in its former glory, to which even its ruins testify. Here we see the unity of things in their organic concatenations. In such moments temporal causality is suspended and change becomes permanence. In the incident of

the madeleine, Proust tells us how a sensation recalled past experiences to him by association which he saw as eternally present. He could now return to the past, feeling safe that he would not be lost in it. He could reach down into the catacombs of his society to discover its immortal Tradition. He feels safe in beginning with the *I* in its infantile stage, in going back to Combray, to the womb of his time, for the *I* is now at one with the *All*. Yet Proust is not merely the dreamer. He is also the observer of his dream. In this way he can carry out the function of the artist: to mediate between the state of dream and the state of consciousness.

Swann's Way and *The Guermantes' Way* are the two corresponding planes along which the novel moves, at first in parallel lines, later simultaneously. *Swann's Way* with its lilac trees and hawthorn blossoms whose odor is "invisible and unchanging," leads to Odette and the Verdurins. (It is the shorter, "practical" route taken in threatening weather.) The other way leads along the winding river aflower with water-lilies and the gilded expanse of buttercups, creating in the mind "a fresh example of absolute, unproductive beauty." This brings one by a longer route to the castle of the Guermantes, descendants of France's royal hierarchy.

The Verdurin and the Guermantes circles are Proust's projections of two alternative ways. The Guermantes, once active in ruling a feudal France, have now become "bores," instinct with piety. Of their former vitality only the gesture and form remain. They have become art, in its esthetic, passive stage. The "faithful" circle of the Verdurins, on the other hand, has "life." But this haute-bourgeoisie is concerned, not with creating its own culture, but with imitating the forms of the aristocracy. They live by speculating rather than working. Despite the outer hustle and bustle, their activities too are without content. If the Guermantes pattern is empty, that of the Verdurins is blind.

Odette is the nether limit of the Verdurin circle. She is the embodiment of all that which is fickle, transitory and elusive among the upstarts and parvenus. There is no unity to Odette

who is different things to different men and women. Hence, Swann can never be sure of her. He can own but not possess her. Her love does not fulfill, but empties; does not satisfy, but tortures; does not release, but arrests. It is "without respite, without variety, without result."

Swann and Saint Loup are the characters who try to bridge the two ways. At the beginning, Swann is the main liaison between the Verdurins and the Guermantes. He is himself, however, a split figure, half-Jew and half-artist, accepted by both circles with reservations. Because of his sensitiveness, self-alienation, and sense of insecurity, he cannot rest content in either group, and becomes the wanderer between the two classes, their sole link in the earlier stage of the story. Ideally, his rôle is that of uniting the fleshly vitality of the one with the formal essence of the other, of bracing the fugitive life of the Verdurins by the formal stature of the Guermantes. This seems to give meaning to his insistence on seeing in Odette a likeness to one of Botticelli's figures. It is his effort to Platonize or give a permanent art-form to her ephemeral nature. His *marriage* to Odette may be seen as his final, somewhat desperate formal expedient of holding her. If Swann is the link from the middle-class fulcrum (Swann himself is a broker), Saint Loup is the link from the Guermantes center. Swann acts out his mediative function by marrying Odette, Saint Loup by marrying Odette's daughter, Gilberte.

But mediation is the essence of art itself. And Proust's own function in his story is *not to choose* between the two ways he presents, as has been the traditional interpretation, but *to mediate* between them. To be sure, Proust recognizes the element of distinction in the Guermantes which, as an artist, he prefers to the vulgarity of the Verdurins. But, as the creator of both, he cannot reject either, for both are needed for his total canvas. Both ways, the Meseglise and the Guermantes, the author tells us, were the deepest layers of his mental soil, became the firm sites on which he was to build his novel. Now, of all the characters in the novel,

it is Swann and Saint Loup with whom Proust identifies himself most directly. They meet with their creator in their common attempts to bridge the two ways.

II

The Faubourg Saint-Germain was Proust's main personal experience. Prevented by his physical fate from evaluating other historical patterns in the process of formation, he was confined to seeing the entire world in its image. And, as it was his only world, he could not but dwell on it at length. In the first books, dealing with his boyhood and adolescence, the magic hold which this past exerted over Proust is strongly felt. As one continues to read volume after volume, however, it becomes clear that the magic is wearing off. It soon becomes evident that Proust is repeating himself, that he is drawing out the story, dwelling on every minutia of his experience. Knowing that this story was his only theme, he continues to fondle the memory of it, loath to surrender his object. The first six volumes are Proust's sustained effort to postpone the inexorable reckoning of the end.

While the author is engaged in recollecting the past of his characters, attempting to live outside of the historical present, time has not been standing still. In 1914 the great explosion breaks the vial in which they had been living a sealed existence. And in the final volume, written shortly before his death, Proust at last confesses that time has affected the two groups. The War breaks through Proust's Platonic realm, rends the veil of illusion, disclosing a revolting and terrifying truth. During sleep, time has been at work, developing both the Guermantes and the Verdurins. It shows the Guermantes as dignified living corpses who no longer believe in themselves. They have surrendered to the Verdurins who have now married into their circle. Their decomposition has been passive. They capitulate with as much grace as is still at their command.

When the War comes, the Guermantes can find no inner grounds for supporting either side. The War is being fought by

two rival industrial groups in which the feudal Guermantes have no vital stake. If anything, their leanings are towards Germany which has preserved something of the feudal internationalism in the old imperial idea with its sense of distinction and personal dignity. Whatever vitality remains in the Guermantes is not expended without; but as in Monsieur de Charlus, it is diverted against itself. The Baron is the Guermantes' last autonomous figure who proves the "civil" nature of the war by making war against himself. At Jupien's, he demonstrates his virility by Sodomic self-tortures. Having exhausted their historic function of living without, they turn on themselves in a manner which, in the case of the Baron, recalls to Proust "all the rich store of medieval scenes, crucifixions and feudal tortures which the imagination treasured." And the author comments that Monsieur de Charlus' "desire to be chained up and beaten, for all its ugliness, betrayed in him a dream as poetic as does in other persons the desire to go to Venice or to keep a chorus girl as a mistress." What is "poetry" with the Baron is ordinary routine with most of the others at this time. Homosexualism and other aberrations which in the earlier volumes had been treated as a restricted and semi-private matter now appear as widespread and public.

The Baron's nephew, Robert Saint Loup, is a younger and more completely disillusioned Guermantes. He has retained their charm, grace, and tact, but has lost all convictions as to the futurity of their tradition. He scorns the wealth and titles of his caste, turns to the study of Nietzsche and Proudhon, and even exhibits "socialist aspirations," noting the heroism of "the common people, workingmen and shopkeepers." He "confesses" the decline of the Guermantes by marrying the daughter of Odette. He too cannot identify himself with the French patriots. And although he enlists in the war, it proves to be a kind of suicide. Long before the war, Saint Loup had said to the narrator: "My life? Oh, let's not talk about it; I'm a doomed man already." Monsieur de Charlus and Robert Saint Loup concretize the *Götterdämmerung* of the Guermantes.

Yet, there remains for Proust an honorable quality in the

Guermantes which appears in their very way of reacting to the war. Despite his participation on the French side, Saint Loup insists on the high value of German art. Describing a Zeppelin raid, he speaks of it as a spectacle of great beauty and takes pleasure in comparing the aviators to Valkyries. While Saint Loup's form of appreciation is testimony that his group has now but an "esthetic" interest in the war, it appears noble in comparison with the rôle which the Verdurins play at this time. The war is a source of financial profit for them. They are its jackals who stay at home, gossip about the news, and continue to hold their barbarous receptions. The morning when the newspapers announce the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Madame Verdurin is at breakfast. Proust then gives this priceless account of her reaction:

While dipping the "croissant" in her coffee and giving her newspaper a fillip now and then so as to make it lie open without her having to interrupt the dipping process, she exclaimed, "How terrible!" But the drowning of all those people must have impressed her with only the millionth part of its real horror because, even while making these deeply grieved comments with her mouth full of "croissant" and coffee, an expression of sweet contentment suffused her face, due probably to the pleasing savour of the "croissant," so effective against headaches.

III

We can understand that, as an artist, Proust should have favored esthetic passivity over commercial interest. He saw the regality of the feudal tradition being superseded by the opportunism and quantitative norms of business *nouveaux riches* who merely copy the outer gestures of the nobility. But, as a critic, he was aware that the nobility, too, was now a society of ghosts. In the last volume he admits that the past, to the "remembrance" of which he had devoted his entire life, was moth-eaten. He now sees the highly lighted drawing-room of the Princesse de Guermantes "flowerbedecked and forgetful, like a peaceful cemetery." His story has turned out to have been an autopsy. Yet

the two ways exhausted the whole of Proust's experience. To reject them would have constituted a repudiation of himself. Hence he was constrained to save their "essence," as a means of salvaging his own life.

Proust interweaves his theory of essences with the account of the reception tendered by the Princesse de Guermantes, at which both "the bores" and "the faithful" are now present, having been united through time. But the union appears as a union in disintegration, and the reception a kind of Last Supper. Despite its macabre character, the reception is described with an objectivity and neutrality, as though the objects alone were present and their central mover no longer bore a living relation to them. He seems to have abandoned his mediative function, which had heretofore provided him with a dramatic attitude towards his characters and their fate. It is as if he already knew of his coming death and had completely accepted it. Indeed, the two mediators within the story itself, Swann and Saint Loup, are already dead. The reception is the "fruit" of their mediative efforts. With their deaths, Proust himself ceases to be the supreme mediator among his characters, and he can now view them without "caring" for them. He seems in this scene a ghost moving among living corpses. Having abandoned his temporal efforts on them, he can observe them impartially as an eternal essence. The dreamer is now fully awake and envisages the whole with complete consciousness. It is this vision which serves him as a talisman. It makes for the silent triumph with which the artist who feels himself as outside "the curve of time" can view his object. He is now indifferent to death, for he is freed from the tyranny of time.

In his theory of essences, Proust repudiates an essential aspect of Bergson's philosophy. Bergson's temporal present is an elusive moment on the wing towards an open and endless future; Proust's is an abiding essence which holds the past and the future captive. His stress on the recurrence and mythical eternality of time runs counter to the linear attitude of Bergson's creative evolution.

Only the unique, qualitative character of time in Proust's work remains Bergsonian.

Proust's denial of creative evolution may also be seen in his structural scheme. The story opens in Combray, at the time when Swann is already married to Odette. It is followed by the account of Swann's wooing of Odette. (The pattern of the Swann-Odette relationship is then almost literally repeated in the relationship between the narrator and Albertine.) A similar regression technique is used by Werfel, Joyce, and Mann,—Mann's Joseph story begins with Joseph already seventeen and then goes back to tell of Jacob's earlier life. The method used here is in contrast to the eighteenth and nineteenth century novel where events are described in chronological sequence. This technique corresponded to a growing economy in which time was a factor making for development and progress. The later novels treat of groups to whom this growth is no longer possible. However, in the work of Joyce, and particularly of Mann, the circular process is not complete, history and time accounting for specific accents. While following in the grooves of his forebears, Joseph introduces crucial variations. Proust, on the other hand, is writing of a group which had completed its cycle.¹ Hence there are no new stages but only slight variations of the old.

The literal nature of Proust's regression is further suggested by the central place which the incident of the mother's kiss has in the novel. The boy's intense need for the kiss of his mother is an expression of his insecurity. His desire for affection and his resentment at being deprived of it by the conventional formalities which demand that his mother keep her guests company are far from normal. The account suggests elements of incest and parricide. The importance which is given to the incident in the Overture and at the close of the novel points to its connection with Proust's central theme: The Quest for original mother-

¹The circularity is suggested by the geographical situation of the two "ways" as well. Starting from the narrator's house, one might take the road leading towards Swann or the Guermantes. By continuing the walk on either, one can come back to the original starting point, having completed a circle. One might see the narrator's home as "the mediate" point between the two.

security. But this regression to the womb was not with an eye towards re-emergence. The catacombs of the night were not to be abandoned. "Once in my room," Proust writes, "I had to stop every loophole, to close the shutters, to dig my own grave as I turned down the bed-clothes, to wrap myself in the shroud of my nightshirt." Proust lived the greater part of his life in the nursery room. And he died there.

Proust's keen critical eye recognized the circular nature of his route. He was aware that his essences were derived not from man's eternal sources, but extracted from a particular phase of social experiencing. Where Mann's Joseph story goes back to communal sources, choosing a period which is on the borderline between the historical and the legendary, Proust confines himself to a definite historical phase. Where Joyce attempts to show in Bloom and in Earwicker modern variations of Everyman's experiences, Proust is limited in his essences to the temporal periphery of his Faubourg Saint-Germain. Hence where Earwicker can be led through his nightmare to the waking day, and Castorp as well as Joseph can break through their metaphysical vials to participate in the activities of the day, Proust's characters are left at their posts of death.

Proust's work is an esthetic approximation of *The Decline of the West*. Spengler identified the decay of feudal-bourgeois culture with that of all culture. Proust's hermetical existence did not permit him to hope for historical rejuvenation. Where, as early as *The Magic Mountain*, Thomas Mann visualized the possible development of a bourgeois-socialist culture, Proust could see no such distant light from his dark room. Yet, it is misleading to interpret his work as complete identification with his past. As half-Jew, and as a sensitive artist and critic, Proust was something of an exile from his world. He could be at home in neither of the ways he knew. Even as he attempts to mediate between them, his art reveals a choice between feudal-esthetic sterility and bourgeois-commercial emptiness. The air-metaphor

which dominates Proust's entire work pertains to people living in *an asthmatic world*, cut off from the fresh winds of the social atmosphere.

The section in which Proust develops his theory of essences has been cited as indicating Proust's identification with the Guermantes. Yet it seems to us that this very section is an indirect expression of Proust's reservations. In it the author breaks the form of his narrative, and begins to talk about his novel, attempting to justify his procedure and the saving of his characters. This theoretical justification would not have been necessary if Proust had felt that the story spoke for itself, that he had fulfilled his mission through *the medium of his art*. Proust himself admits in this very volume that "a book in which there are theories is like an article from which the price mark has not been removed." These forensic passages with their introduction of an *outside* perspective, it seems to us, are Proust's confession to his own lack of conviction that he had actually accomplished what he had wanted. Or, to put it the other way: Proust had accomplished what he had set out to do. But what he had aimed at was to regain that which he knew was lost. In this way, Proust illustrated the complex alienation of personality. He saved himself in his consummate craftsmanship, by means of which he fulfilled his rôle of esthetic mediator. He saved himself only as an artist. He could not save his life nor the life of his people.

by Robert B. Heilman

ARTIST AND PATRIA

THE discussion of the function—and the responsibility—of literature which has accompanied the development of the crisis in a world-order grows in part from a confusion so elementary that to define it seems naïve. But to indicate a primary distinction, however simple, is apparently necessary: it is the distinction between the artist as artist and the artist as citizen. The problem is of less urgency in peace, when the demands of citizenship are less insistent, less focused, less succinct. Under the threats of radical disorder, however, the artist may have to become for a brief time completely the citizen—as fighter or in some comparable rôle. This may not be wholly pleasant, like various other tasks imposed by the desire for physical survival. But for the artist temporarily not to speak as artist, whatever the deprivation which society thus experiences, is not fatal either to the artist or to society.

What is fatal to the artist, and therefore very dangerous to society, is failure to distinguish the two elements in his dual status and consequently the effort to be artist and citizen in one. It is fatal, on one hand, to circumscribe art by boundaries that are or appear to be dictated by citizenship, which is shortsighted and in its common acceptance rarely does more than summarize temporary proprieties; on the other, to attempt to meet with art a demand for unreserved citizenship, to exercise citizenship in terms appropriate only to art. This is to serve local gods at altars reserved to the Olympians; it is the fatal confusion of artist and propagandist. This is not to decry propaganda as such: in its best sense it is doubtless a necessity in crises, it is as suitable to the artist as to anyone else, and it may evoke his most competent work as mere citizen. But here he must stay

citizen and write to citizens; as artist he talks only to human beings, who are citizens only of a world-order or a moral order; thus, though he can do American propaganda, he can in no proper sense do American poetry or American novels. This he must above all keep in mind when he faces the patriot-critic who would impose on him, as artist, a set of rules and regulations which, despite every nobility of intention, can but secure the production of propaganda.

The critic who would impose such inappropriate obligations either is, or is in danger of being, hypnotized by the vision of *The American Century*. This concept, which on various levels has been much cried up of late, is in the end destructive in that it comes to mean a prolongation of the schismatic progress which has brought us so close to ultimate anarchy; yet literary nationalism, which springs from a misconception of the organic society and its mode of becoming apparent in literary expression, has the effect, perhaps without its proponents' realizing the fact, of conferring approval on the *Century*. The danger, both social and aesthetic, is that art is asked to underwrite a position that is in itself heretical, whereas it is not the business of art to underwrite anything, least of all a separatism foreign to its own implications. It is not the nature of art to become the voice of a culture by the artist's volition; art's self-consciousness is of another sort. If it does speak for an organic entity, that achievement is something more than the mere fulfillment of intention; and whether that achievement is to the glory of art, as is often loosely supposed, is still a question, which must be answered from evidence more inclusive than the assumption that to accept the nearest portion of the universe is in all ways good.

It is ironic that from the country against which we crusade as infidel there came in the 1820's Goethe's expression of hope for a "universal world literature." And now we, the professed defenders of the central and the traditional, seem in some quarters bent upon a God-Bless-America school of literature—a sentimental journey, so to speak, from the white cliffs of Dover to Lidice,

Illinois (with, one is tempted to add on the authority of B. H. Haggin, symphonic effects from Shostakovich's Seventh). This is what we inevitably get when we write dithyrambs to our side, confuse the political superstructure for the human foundation, and deliberately celebrate America. Evidence enough on recent neowhitmanism is accumulated in the final chapter of Alfred Kazin's new book. There the flowering of Van Wyck Brooks, one of the most vigorous members of the anti-alien committee, falls under a partial blight. Another committeeman, H. M. Jones, who at his own level has more than a tinge of the Peglerian, has banished T. S. Eliot because his ideas are not "pertinent to the problem of American culture." Paul Engle has publicly expressed amazement at a southern poet's opinion "that the word America was poison to poetry." Thomas Wolfe was haunted by the idea of the American epic. But benevolence is not enough: American Song and American Epic cannot come as acts of will or of filial piety. Their coming will not be wholly according to plan or expectation, and we will listen to them only because they are more than American.

We forget, though we need to stress it, a paradox at the heart of all literary performance: that, while the quality of a work is wholly bound up with the kind of affirmation the work makes, to predetermine the affirmation and then to work from it—that is, to act as underwriter—are almost inevitably fatal to the work. The resolution of this paradox—and a useful reminder to all who would impose any sort of politico-civico-cultural burden on the artist—is in a statement by Henry James: "There is one point at which the moral sense and the artistic sense lie very close together: that is in the light of the very obvious truth that the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer." But to preestablish totally the sense and terminus of the work—whether the step be taken by censor or critic or hopeful artist himself—is to ignore the quality of the mind of the producer, to deprive the mind of that freedom to deal flexibly with the range of materials under exploration by which

the quality becomes apparent. From the loss of freedom to revise hypotheses as the human materials demand comes the doctrinaire stance which rigidifies the artist. Thus inflexibly facing in one direction, he cannot see enough to achieve a work of plausible complexity. As doctrinaire he is stiff, formalized, oversimplified. In Wicksteed's words, he fails by appealing to logic—a partisan logic, however—instead of experience. He starts with an invariable law and proceeds deductively; he starts with a paradigm and as artist has only to fit new words into it. But the real business of art is to amend or dissolve paradigms, to be simultaneously conscious of absolutes and contexts. To stick unflinchingly to doctrine will not likely stir the imaginations of the wary. It may—I say *may*—achieve a wholly non-literary end by giving usable assistance to some school of morality or economics or patriotism. But the irony of it is that to start with morality is often to end with something else; somehow the initial concept hardens and narrows itself into an ignoble parody. The good-little-boy stories fail aesthetically: and they are not even effective homilies. Only the fine quality of the mind of the artist who knows when to deviate and to reconstruct, how to experiment instead of prove, can prevent a work's being trivial by-play or dubious exhortation. Bunyan grows by his use of the extra-allegorical; considered purely as moralist, he is most effective when he is least trying to prove his point.

Likewise the artist as American succeeds best when he does not have his eye on the flag or the national destiny; his loyalties are transcendent, and if he is to be subjected to a kind of literary tariff and embargo, he will dwindle into a tub-thumper. The artist is man before he is citizen, and only by integrity in the first rôle can he be significant in the second. What is true of or good for mankind is true of or good for Americans; but a specifically American version of the good and the true may be quite inadequate for mankind. Art speaks for mankind; it is not subject to local option. The New World Symphony was not produced

on motion of the America-First Society, nor by an America-Firster.

Santayana defines poetry as "a theoretic vision of things held at arm's length." "At arm's length," I take it, means aesthetic detachment, by virtue of which the poet escapes salesmanship, party leadership, or, in Irving Babbitt's words, the agitation of local problems. Without it he becomes the doctrinaire, the factional leader with the simple program. To nationalize the poet is to deprive him of detachment, to confuse artist with propagandist.

II

The Americanization of art finds an interesting analogy in literary history: though it stems from romantic nationalism, it is actually a kind of neoclassicism. There is the same predetermination of subject and pattern; there is the same vast act of exclusion. Neoclassic apriorism is notably indifferent to the mind of the artist, for its chief premise is that given materials, treated in a given way, will work as art—almost autonomously, regardless of the craftsman's intuitions or lack of them. His unique quality has but a negligible field of operations.

But our most insistent neoclassicism is that of the lovers of poetic justice. Frank Jones neatly described this as the "neo-Aristotelian view that literature is under some moral obligation to assuage rather than sharpen discontent." Here we find all the dissent from "pessimism" as something that is aesthetically and morally perverse; as a rejection, blind or wilful, of all the imperatives by which humanity realizes itself. The pessimist is a nasty fellow. He has, too, an associate who is equally undesirable—the irreverent man; for irreverence is now in vast disrepute. This despite our palpable diffidence in providing usable indications as to what can be revered (possibly nationalism is an over-hasty snatch at definition). Just reverence; that's all. By the neoclassical, art is somewhat naïvely regarded as a quick builder of what is now called "morale"; if the author does not

with agreeable directness and emphasis prove that justice and the other virtues currently in repute are winning out handily, he is cynical and irresponsible and demoralizing. And he must present these victories as of the present; no long-range programs. One wonders whether Dante in his day would not have seemed regrettably demoralizing to those critics who look for the cheerio note. And Shakespeare, and Swift. It may be enlightening, by the way, to note the ironic fact that Samuel Johnson, who as rule-maker has been much laughed at, overcame in his old age an earlier predilection for poetic justice: "For if poetry," he says, "has an imitation of reality, how are its laws broken by exhibiting the world in its true form? The stage may sometimes gratify our wishes; but, if it be truly the *mirror of life*, it ought to show us sometimes what we may expect." But Johnson had, in the words of another critic, "the transcendental skepticism of the great Tories." What we need now, clearly, is more great-Toryism of this sort—a fullness and immediacy of vision with which to by-pass rules and regulations; thus we may perceive that to present the Yahoos without reserve, and without specific editorial reassurances, is not to insist on Yahooism as the final human truth.

At the last we come to the basic indispensability: the necessity of understanding literary method, of being efficiently responsive to indirection and implication, of not expecting the simple formulations of the pamphleteer. To say this is to hold forth at the hornbook level. Yet in the understanding of method is just where much neoclassical criticism failed, and where its modern counterparts fail. In any ultimate sense art is concerned with morale; it must make affirmations; it is responsible, and it is a tool of justice. But how? There is the crux. Certainly the method of art is not that of the homespun homilist, the ecclesiast, the lexicographer; of the interior decorator or the window-dresser; most of all, not that of the perfumer. The music of the spheres is not always likely to be sweet. The ingenuous apparently need a reminder that a traditional imaginative approach to truth has

been the careful examination of various sides of it—even the underside—from various points of view. The mature artist eschews the sentimental profile of the “portraitist”; again and again he is compelled to send forth a picture of notable lack of charm. But there is no need to fear the artist who sees failure or decay and unrelentingly forces us to look at it, for, if we are normal, the experience will be tonic. The real cause for fear is the artist who in his vociferous hoorahing drowns out the whispers of dissolution; who cannot distinguish decay from growth and so in his kindly and comforting assurances leads us on to permanent and irreparable confusion.

III

It is a case of means and ends: a treatment of decay can be a means to health; through denial can come affirmation. It is only the unsophisticated who expect all affirmations to be made with the heroic violence of the cheerleader. But moralists and patriots alike distrust the oblique, are blind to the implicit, and think that the present is all. Their party-line is the cheerleader's: all assents and repudiations have been decided upon in advance by a few simple rules.

Hence patriots, though they may aim at a subtler glory, eventually turn literature into a sort of verbal Stars and Stripes Forever. Now one thing is clear enough: that American writers are going to work largely in American materials and themes because these are the known world¹. These are writers' *means*, not their ends; through them writers make such affirmations as their insight equips them to make. They write about farmers or city people or woodsmen, or southerners or midwesterners, not to glorify them as such (literary Ziegfeldism), nor to condemn

¹It is well to remember, though, James' definition of the “experience” from which novelists are urged to write as “the very atmosphere of the mind,” which “converts the very pulses of the air into revelations.” It is, he says further, “the power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implications of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it.”

them, but through them, as familiar vital figures, to encompass as possible the human verities which, in their transcendence of the temporal and the local, are the essential field of literature.

To mistake the means for a splendid finality, to rest in local pride, is fatal to letters. It is to give the architect his blueprint when he is engaged, to provide specifications for the portrait-painter; it will produce flattery, not art. To demand of literature a comforting hand, a bedside manner, has its especial dangers in wartime, for it leads to the terrible suspicion of hundred-percentism, to the eventual disillusioned conviction that our men of imaginative insight have sold out to the emergency. René Wellemek, while in no sense defending chauvinism, speaks of the tendency, in times of stress, to return to the "sources of national tradition." It is well, I think, to see to it that we do not mistake for such sources mere romantic legend or nostalgic syntheses or the quaint upturning of antiquarian diligence; to be quite clear that the sources of national tradition are valid not because they are national but because they are extra-national, because they embody those matters of the spirit which are the source of every vital human tradition, whether or not it has been given some national guise. If the insights that in their formal uniqueness constitute literature are to invite respect, if they are to be real insights, they must take the hard way. It is customary to say that our age is hostile to poetry, and true it is that to engage attention the modern *vates* must come smoking from the laboratory. It will not do, however, to berate the technician or to attempt to rival him with pleasant prophecies and promises. No; if the imaginative artist is to rise above the mere entertainer, he must at the start avoid any slight appearance whatever of what Bacon calls facility; of being a servant of the times and a coddler of his neighbors; of stopping short of those ultimate invigorating perceptions which can spare neither time nor place because they proceed from the human values which all times and places, if they would endure, must serve.

LEVIATHAN

After the farmer knocked out Abel's brains,
Our Father hung the world upon my soul,
 A patriot's patrol,
To watch and ward off heresies. My Cain's
Stigmata drowned the Serpent in his Hole.

How soon I spat on God's strait fellowship!
He sends me Canaan or Exile, Ark or Flood,
 At last, for either good,
Our Savior and His saving Heart. The Ship
Of State is asking Christ to walk on blood:

Great Commonwealth, roll onward, roll
On blood; for while the ocean monster flings
 Out its satanic stings,
Or like an octopus constricts my soul,
You haul Leviathan to the king of kings.

by Robert Lowell

DEA ROMA

Augustus mended you. He hung the tongue
Of Tullius upon your rostrum, lashed
The money-lenders from your Senate House;
Then Brutus bled his forty-six per cent
For *Pax Romana*. Quiet as a mouse,
Blood smeared your Greek cosmetic with its tongue.

Some years, your legions soldiered through this world
Under the eagles of Lord Lucifer;
But human torches lit the generals home,
And victims dyed the purple crucifix:
All of the ways and sewers wound to Rome;
Satan was pacing up and down the world.

How many butchers and philosophers
Dirtied the Babylonian purple! Blood
Ran to the tune of public aqueducts;
Vandal patricians squatted on the lid,
Until Maxentius, floundering in the mud,
Wiped out the cross of the philosophers.

Now sixteen centuries, Eternal City,
Are squandered since the inflated pagans flowed
Under the Milvian Bridge; from the dry dome
Of Michelangelo, your fisherman
Walks on the waters of a draining Rome;
He banks his catch on the Celestial City.

by Robert Lowell

DEATH FROM CANCER ON EASTER

This Easter, Arthur Winslow, less than dead
Your people set you up in Phillips House
To settle off your wrangle with the crab
Whose claws drop flesh on your serge yachting blouse,
Until longshoreman Charon come and stab
Through your Procrustes' bed,
And catch the crab. On Boston Basin, shells
Hit water by the Union Boat Club's wharf;
You ponder why the coxes' squeakings dwarf
The *resurrexit Dominus* of all the bells;

Grandfather Winslow, look, the swanboats coast
That island in the Public Gardens, where
The bread-stuffed ducks are brooding, where with tub
And strainer the mid-Sunday Irish scare
The sun-struck shallows for the dusky chub,
This Easter, and the Ghost,
With seven wounds walks on the waves to bear
Arthur upon a trumpeting black swan
Beyond Charles River to the Acheron
Where timbers draw no water for the voyager.

by Robert Lowell

ON THE EVE OF THE FEAST OF THE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, 1942

Mother of God, whose burly love
Rebuffed the sword, I must improve
 On the big wars
And make a holiday with Mars
Your Feast Day, while the pacifists' bluff
 Courage or call it what you please
 Plays blindman's buff
 Through virtue's knees.

Freedom and Eisenhower have won
Significant laurels where the Hun
 And Roman kneel
To lick the dust from Mars' booothel
Like foppish bloodhounds; yet you sleep
Out our distemper's evil day
 And hear no sheep
 Or hangdog bay!

Bring me tonight no axe to grind
On hones of the Utopian mind:
 Six thousand years
Cain's blood has drummed into my ears.
Shall I wring plums from Plato's bush
When Buna's and Bizerte's dead
 Must puff and push
 Blood into bread?

Oh, if soldiers mind you well
They shall find you are their belle
And belly too:
Christ's bread and beauty came by you,
Celestial Hoyden, when our Lord
Choked with Golgotha's bloody tide
You shook the sword
From his torn side.

Over the seas and far away
They feast the fair and bloody day
When mankind's Mother,
Jesus' Mother, like another
Nimrod danced on Satan's head
The old Snake lopes to his shelled hole;
Man eats the Dead
From pole to pole.

by Robert Lowell

PRAYER FOR THE JEWS

Lord, even here at the Antipodes,
Where barbarous Dante, child of the cowled night,
Before the dawn of the discoveries,
Scaled sky-flung Purgatory; All Soul's Night
Shrouds Israel with its ghostless tallow. Peace!
Jerusalem's candles are the serpent's sight,
Her faggots are the steel that ribs our house.
I am sick, I must die. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our first-fruits were the million factories
That smouldered under palls of anthracite,
Begging the Melting-Pot's impersonal dyes
To blot our ghostly mercies with their night.
While Caesar stewed in his own grease? But peace!
No Jew can pray in Purgatory's night;
The Son of Morning's fireworks light our house.
I am sick, I must die. Lord, have mercy on us.

Here Yankee laissez-faire and enterprise
Build pyres on expiation to the night,
The rising sun of aping Japanese
Blazes upon the democratic twilight,
Old ironsides shatter the Pacific Seas.
O Jesus, stop the rat-holes of the night,
We cauterized the fangs that rat our house!
I am sick, I must die. Lord, have mercy on us.

by Robert Lowell

FAREWELL TO MILES

We are to tell one man tonight goodbye.
Therefore in little glasses Scotch, therefore
Inane talk on the chaise longue by the door,
Therefore the loud man, the man small and shy
Who squats, the hostess as she has a nut
Laughing like ancestor. Hard, hard to find
In thirteen bodies one appropriate mind,
It is hard to find a knife that we can cut.

The dog is wandering among the men
And wander may: who knows where who will be,
Under what master, in what company,
When what we hope has not come again
For the last time? Schedules, nerves will crack
In the distortion of that ultimate loss;
Sad eyes at frenzied eyes will look across,
Blink, be resigned. The men then will come back.

How many of these are destined there? Not one
But may be there, staring, but some may trick
By attack or by some prodigy of luck
The sly dog. McPherson in the Chinese sun
May achieve the annihilation of his will;
The urbane and bitter Miles at Harvard may
Discover in time an acid holiday
And let the long wound of his birth lie still.

Possibilities, dreams, in a crowded room.
Fantasy for the academic man,
Release, distinction. Let the man who can,
Does any peace know, now arise and come
Out of the highballs, past the dog, forward.
(I hope you will be happier where you go
Than you or we were here, and learn to know
What satisfactions there are.) No one heard.

by John Berryman

ANCESTOR

The old men wept when great-grandfather in blue
Appeared in the doorway of the train, time spun
And spun the passion of his life before him,
Seeing the wet eyes of his former staff:

Crossing from Tennessee, the river in Spring,
White River Valley, his original regiment,
Three horses shot from under him at Shiloh
Fell, the first ball took Hindman's horse as well
And then the two legs from an orderly

Rain on the lost field, rain and violence,
Corruption; the Klan, a forgotten tongue
Brought to its By-Laws and its Constitution,
The Latin syllables

he an exile fled,
Both his plantations, great-grandmother's too
Gone, fled south and south into Honduras
Where great-grandmother was never reconciled
To monkeys or the thought of monkeys

once

Tricked into eating a part of one, she kept
Eight months her bed

the burning of the colony,
Lifting of charges, and a late return,
The stranger in his land, and silence, silence

(Only the great grey riddled cloak spoke out
And sometimes a sudden breath or look spoke out)

Reflected blue saw in the tears of men,
Blue, the ultimate colour, colour of the enemy,
And coughed once, twice, before he came forward;
Now Federal, now Sheriff, nearly eighty,
Controlled with difficulty his old eyes
As he stepped down, for the first time, in blue.

by John Berryman

by Lionel Stevenson

DICKENS'S DARK NOVELS, 1851-1857

DICKENS between 1851-1857 produced a group of three works which astonish the critics by their pronounced unlikeness to his other books. The atmosphere of bitterness and frustration that pervades all three of them justifies one in adapting the phrase that is used in Shakespearian criticism and calling them "the dark novels." Even their titles are eloquent of the harshness of their contents—BLEAK HOUSE, HARD TIMES, LITTLE DORRIT. The first of them came unexpectedly on the heels of his hearty and wholesome DAVID COPPERFIELD; and the third of them was immediately followed by his nearest approximation to the dignity of tragedy—A TALE OF TWO CITIES. Insulated between these two, which remain his most popular stories today, the three dark novels are certainly the least read of his major works.

They differ from his other stories in many respects. Farcical humor is almost totally absent. The style is self-consciously elaborate and rhetorical. For the first time he undertakes carefully complicated plots, in which multiple strands are deftly interwoven. People of the higher social strata play leading rôles and are depicted with realistic detail, whereas the occasional aristocrat who wandered into his earlier novels was a stock figure out of the old melodrama. More notably still, the purpose of social criticism now interpenetrates and motivates the whole story, instead of being confined to isolated episodes. The workhouse scenes in OLIVER TWIST, the school scenes in NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, the prison scenes in PICKWICK and DAVID COPPERFIELD were merely incidents in picaresque tales and were directed at local abuses; but now the propagandistic intention is primary. BLEAK HOUSE is a symphonic composition based on the inhumanity of

the court of chancery, but indicting the whole fabric of legal procedure and tradition; *HARD TIMES* is a sociological treatise on industrial conflict and capitalistic greed; *LITTLE DORRIT* is a batch of psychological case-histories illuminating administrative incompetence, dishonest speculation, and the evils of imprisonment for debt. In all three books, the legal and social injustices of England are traced back with persistent and angry satire to the parliamentary parties controlling the government.

Above all other elements, however, the depressing effect of these three novels arises from the futility of the characters. In Edmund Wilson's words, "In general, the magnanimous, the simple of heart, the amiable, the loving, and the honest are frustrated, subdued, or destroyed."¹ Good people and bad are alike entangled in a fatalistic web that thwarts their projects, sometimes through the inherent weaknesses of human nature, sometimes through violent incursions of blind chance. In spite of conventionally happy endings, therefore, the three novels steep the reader in almost unmitigated gloom.

What events in the personal life of Dickens might have contributed to this abrupt change of mood? Certainly, success and fortune were coming to him in full measure. In 1850 he became editor of *HOUSEHOLD WORDS*, a post that demanded steady attention but brought him into close and somewhat autocratic touch with the leading writers. In October, 1851, the month when he was beginning *BLEAK HOUSE*, he moved into a handsome London residence, Tavistock House, where he could entertain with the magnificence that he loved; and in the spring of 1856—the year of his dark period—he fulfilled his life-long ambition by purchasing Gad's Hill Place. Throughout the period, he travelled frequently on the Continent, and he was in constant demand as a patron for charitable and other public affairs.

On the other hand, in the spring of 1851 his father and his infant daughter died within two weeks, and during the next year the deaths of several close friends moved him to morbid comment: "It

¹Edmund Wilson, *THE WOUND AND THE BOW* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p. 40.

is a tremendous consideration that friends should fall around us in such awful numbers as we attain middle life. What a field of battle it is!"² His wife, too, suffered an illness in January, 1851, which may have marked the beginning of the emotional aberrations which he later attributed to her. These facts, however, are quite inadequate to explain the restlessness and discontent that tormented him while he was working on the early numbers of *BLEAK HOUSE*. "Wild ideas are upon me," he wrote to Forster, "of going to Paris—Rouen—Switzerland—somewhere—and writing the remaining two-thirds of the next No. aloft in some queer inn room."³ This rebelliousness grew steadily stronger during the next five years, expressing itself in fantastic schemes of escape. In 1854 he told Forster:

If I could have managed it, I think possibly I might have gone to the Pyrenees for six months. . . . I have visions of living for half a year or so, in all sorts of inaccessible places, and opening a new book therein. A floating idea of going up above the snow-line in Switzerland, and living in some astonishing convent, hovers about me.⁴

More than a year later, in January, 1856, he was still obsessed with the project:

Again I am beset by my former notions of a book whereof the whole story shall be on the top of the Great St. Bernard. As I accept and reject ideas for *LITTLE DORRIT*, it perpetually comes back to me. Two or three years hence, perhaps you'll find me living with the Monks and the Dogs a whole winter—among the blinding snows that fall about that monastery. I have a serious idea that I shall do it, if I live.⁵

He even entertained recurring impulses to emigrate to Australia and begin life all over again.

Mr. Wilson attributes this frame of mind to two causes, "a marriage which exasperated and cramped him and from which he had not been able to find relief, and a social maladjustment which

²John Forster, *THE LIFE OF CHARLES DICKENS*, ed. & annot. by J. W. T. Ley (London, 1928), p. 569.

³*Ibid.*, p. 568.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 638.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 639.

his success had never straightened out."⁶ Mr. Wilson interprets the three dark novels largely in terms of these two psychic dis-harmonies.

Before accepting his analysis as final, however, one might review the two other considerations which have been applied to the analogous investigation of Shakespeare. On looking at the contemporary background, one may be at first struck by an inconsistency between Dickens's mood and that of the general public. 1851, the year when he began *BLEAK HOUSE*, is best known as the year of the Great Exhibition, that climax of Victorian confidence in material prosperity, scientific progress, and universal peace. Strangely, the biography and letters of Dickens reveal scarcely any interest in the Exhibition on his part, although most of the other authors, from the gregarious Thackeray to the reclusive Charlotte Brontë, participated in it with excitement. Beneath the prosperous surface, however, lurked ominous currents. Two years before, the great upsurge of proletarian unrest, the Chartist movement, had failed through the ineptitude of its leadership, and its suppression brought a glow of relief to the privileged classes, whose complacency had been shattered for a few months by sick dread of revolution. To Dickens the defeat of the popular cause was deeply disappointing, and he watched with interest the beginnings of a sounder structure of Trades Unions, initiated in this same year 1851 by the organization of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. In January, 1854, when he was beginning *HARD TIMES*, he made a special journey to Preston to witness a strike, and was rather disappointed to find that "except the crowds at the street-corners reading the placards pro and con, and the cold absence of smoke from the mill chimneys, there is very little in the streets to make the town remarkable. I am told that the people 'sit at home and mope.' "⁷ In March, 1855, he made one of his rare incursions into politics, by speaking at a huge mass meeting held at Drury Lane Theatre in support of legislative reform; and the next month he reiterated

⁶Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-5.

⁷Forster, *op. cit.*, p. 567.

his political dissatisfaction in the inappropriate circumstances of his chairman's remarks at a dinner of the General Theatrical Fund, reporting gleefully to Forster that "the Government hit took immensely."⁹

Another morbid symptom in the economic life of the country was the mania for speculation. In spite of the repeated collapses of railway enterprises in the later forties, the public was still blindly confident in any venture offered by the unscrupulous promoters. An outstanding example of this exploitation of human greed was supplied by the bankruptcy and suicide of John Sadlier, M.P. in the spring of 1856.

The nation's foreign policy, too, was far from satisfactory, and two years of Dickens's dark period—from March, 1854, to February, 1856—were occupied with the most unpopular of all England's campaigns, the Crimean War. Dickens and most of his friends were unsparing in their condemnations, and even the eventual defeat of Russia was as hollow a triumph as the "happy endings" of the dark novels themselves.

These currents of history certainly supplied some of the episodes for the three novels and may well have contributed to their morose atmosphere. More significant, however, is the record of literary developments at this juncture. During the first ten years of his career Dickens had only negligible competition in the writing of novels. The best sellers were tawdry imitators of Scott, such as Ainsworth and G. P. R. James, or improvising swashbucklers like Captain Marryat and R. S. Surtees, or—at best—the affected "society novelists," Disraeli and Bulwer. In contrast with all of these, the vitality, variety, and humor of Dickens's earlier novels, their inexhaustible details from familiar English life, their thronging parade of unforgettable characters, had enough appeal to disguise the defects of the books—their exaggerations, their sentimentality, their lack of organic structure.

But in the late forties Dickens's pre-eminence was widely threatened by new writers with merits which Dickens conspicu-

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 575.

ously lacked. In 1847, much discussion was aroused by *JANE EYRE* and *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*, with their morbid but compelling insight into passionate psychology. During 1847 and 1848, *VANITY FAIR* appeared serially and was gradually recognized as a masterpiece of polished satirical analysis of upper-class *mores*. In 1848 came two novels that presented social problems in an earnest and consistent light—Mrs. Gaskell's *MARY BARTON* and Charles Kingsley's *YEAST*. And all these new rivals quickly proved that their powers of production were to be reckoned with: Thackeray brought out *PENDENNIS* during 1849 and 50, and *HENRY ESMOND* in 1852; Charlotte Brontë's *SHIRLEY* came in 1849 and *VILLETTÉ* in 1853; Kingsley's controversial *ALTON LOCKE* in 1850.

Definite influences of all these competitors promptly showed themselves in the work of Dickens. When *DAVID COPPERFIELD* began to appear in January, 1849, a few months after the conclusion of *VANITY FAIR*, Thackeray remarked astutely:

It pleases the other author to see that Dickens, who has long left off alluding to the A's works, has been copying the O.A. and greatly simplifying his style, and overcoming the use of fine words. By this the public will be the gainer and *DAVID COPPERFIELD* will be improved by taking a lesson from *VANITY FAIR*.*

In *DAVID COPPERFIELD*, however, the story is basically akin to Dickens's earlier novels, and the influence of the new realists can be seen only in a certain restraint previously absent. In Dickens's next novel, commenced when the significance of his rivals had sunk in more deeply, he undertook a fundamental revolution of his whole technique.

BLEAK HOUSE, as I have indicated, is a marvel of structural unity. The central topic—the demoralizing injustice of the court of chancery—does not merely provide an atmospheric milieu for the whole story, but links the vast array of characters in one intricate pattern. The plot uses suspense, mystery, and detection so skilfully that the book is still regarded as the first full-length

*A COLLECTION OF LETTERS OF W. M. THACKERAY, 1847-1855 (London, 1887), p. 68.

detective story. Its narrative method is yet more remarkable. Having discovered in *DAVID COPPERFIELD* the advantages of the first-personal presentation in enhancing the sense of reality, he now undertook the more hazardous task of making the narrator a woman—and a modest, guileless young woman, at that. At once, difficulties supervened: the monotony of her artless diction, the artificiality of her innocent self-revelations, above all the fact that she could not possibly be cognizant of all the vast web of events that made the story. Accordingly, Dickens tried the unprecedented experiment of alternating first-personal chapters with others from the customary "omniscient" point of view. The effort of plausibly impersonating a naïve girl was therefore immeasurably complicated by the constant shifting of angle in the reader's mind.

Why, then, did Dickens attempt to look out through the eyes of Esther Summerson? By the time one has read a chapter, one is impressed by the resemblance to *Jane Eyre*. Esther's character, her style, her environment, are all straight out of Charlotte Brontë's novels. Dickens is thus undertaking a more serious and subtle psychological study. As Esther is only one strand of his web, he does not develop her emotional complexities as fully as Charlotte Brontë would have done, but there are some remarkable implications nonetheless. Although Dickens was never greatly addicted to love stories, he usually provided a hero and heroine of the stock pattern. With this heroine, however, he was radically unconventional. A handsome admirer was introduced, to be sure, but was immediately shipped off to the Orient for the duration of the story, and Esther's emotions were directed in two other channels—her intense (almost Lesbian) affection for the pretty doll-like Ada Clare, and the equally profound devotion between her and her elderly self-elected guardian.

With this strand in *BLEAK HOUSE*, then, Dickens was meeting the competition of Charlotte Brontë. With another equally conspicuous strand he was challenging Thackeray. Sir Leicester and Lady Dedlock, their vast household and sycophantic associates,

and all the glimpses of muddle-headed political intrigue that they provide, are delineated with mannered sarcasm straight out of *VANITY FAIR*. The recognizable portraits of Leigh Hunt and Landor, which caused so much ill feeling, follow the lead of Thackeray's caricatures of John Wilson Croker and Theodore Hook.

The third competitive force—the proletarian novels of Kingsley and Mrs. Gaskell—bulks less largely but is equally significant. Mr. Wilson comments on the particularly effective little scenes in which Sir Leicester Dedlock's privileges are challenged by the self-made ironmaster, Rouncewell.¹⁰ But Mr. Wilson does not add the further point that this ironmaster's mother, the stately old housekeeper of the Dedlocks, is certainly a portrait of Dickens's own grandmother, housekeeper to Lord Crewe;¹¹ and that here for the first time Dickens by implication admitted his own antecedents of domestic servitude. Even though the Rouncewell family plays a minor rôle in the story, they are depicted with a special sympathy that reveals the author's sense of identification with them.

In his next novel, *HARD TIMES*, this theme is developed to major importance, and the parallel to the sociological novels of Mrs. Gaskell and Kingsley is obvious. He builds the whole story around the oligarchy of "big business," with its statistical political science that ignores human values. With his customary distrust of all organized welfare systems and self-appointed uplifters, he depicts the Union organizer as being as greedy and selfish as the employers. But the essential conflict of capital and labor is presented so baldly, the complacency of the *laissez-faire* industrialists and the utilitarian cant that masks their rapacity, are contrasted so persistently with the nobility of the honest working man, that the story has a machine-made effect, totally devoid of those inconsistent human traits that give verisimilitude to even

¹⁰Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

¹¹For the evidence supporting this identification, see Gladys Storey, *DICKENS AND DAUGHTER* (London, 1939), pp. 31-34, 53-54.

the most exaggerated characters and episodes in all his other books. But instead one can observe a consistent if somewhat laborious effort to provide psychological motivation for all the persons in the story.

It is *LITTLE DORRIT*, however, that marks the culmination of the dark period; and in it elements from both the previous books are combined with new material. The selfishness of capitalism and its baleful interlocking relationship with the government are shown in the career of Mr. Merdle (based on the newly defunct John Sadlier). The stupidity of bureaucratic nepotism is lampooned in the Barnacle family and their Circumlocution office. The demoralizing torments of the legal system are illustrated by the life of the Dorrit family in the Marshalsea. And in its style of writing the book is permeated with those rhetorical devices of balance, contrast, and repetition, which had given a self-conscious effect to both the previous books.

The Thackerayan social satire is still present in the pictures of the Merdle establishment and of the Dorrits during their prosperity. A carefully planned mystery plot is established from the very beginning, in the sinister Blandois and the inscrutable doings in the old Clennam house.

Against this background of the external forces shaping the three novels, we can now return to the question of subjective elements. In this respect, too, *LITTLE DORRIT* is the culmination of tendencies that first appeared in *BLEAK HOUSE*. The theme of marital discord was clearly indicated in that book in Mrs. Snagsby's jealous spying on her husband and Lady Dedlock's dishonoring of her husband's family. The sardonic Tulkinghorn recurrently sounds the keynote in such remarks as, "My experience teaches me that most of the people I know would do far better to leave marriage alone. It is at the bottom of three-fourths of their troubles." In *LITTLE DORRIT*, however, the theme of incompatibility reaches its apex, with no less than five mismated couples spreading misery throughout the story.

Somewhat allied to this theme is another which figures identi-

cally in the two books, though in both instances hampered and obscured by Victorian evasiveness. This is the injustice and cruelty of the stigma attached to illegitimacy. By her grimly Puritanical aunt, Esther Summerson is impressed from childhood with an unexplained accusation of guilt, which is eventually overcome only by her serene disposition and the wise kindness of Mr. Jarndyce. Exactly the same unrelenting punishment upon the offspring of "sin" is visited by Mrs. Clennam upon her husband's son Arthur, in *LITTLE DORRIT*, with more lasting ill effects. A pendant example is rather awkwardly dragged into the same book in the neurotic Miss Wade, who is eventually allowed to reveal her stigmatized origin in a defiant autobiographical chapter that again has Brontëian overtones. In both books, Dickens is able to introduce the theme only by removing the irregular love affair far into the past, so that he can reveal it by summary and can avoid a fuller narration that might have exposed him to the charge of condoning sin. But in both he is explicit in condemning the narrowness and sadism that inflict shame upon the illegitimate child.

A third theme in *LITTLE DORRIT* grew out of a situation in *BLEAK HOUSE* but took a somewhat new form. In the earlier book, the love between Mr. Jarndyce and Esther was depicted as essentially a father-daughter relationship even though for a short time they were engaged. In *LITTLE DORRIT* Dickens handles the harder psychological problem of showing a man of forty and a girl of twenty falling in love with each other. Arthur Clennam is not only at that most unromantic age, but he is in every other respect also an unheroic figure, being inhibited to the point of utter helplessness as a result of his stepmother's vengeful oppression and his subsequent long exile in China. Various friends repeatedly take him in hand and protect or advise him, and at the end he would never have realized that he was in love with Amy Dorrit and she with him, if she had not proposed to him.

There can be no doubt that much autobiography went into *LITTLE DORRIT*—almost as much as into *DAVID COPPERFIELD*. But

the difference in Dickens's handling of the same materials in the two novels is a measure of the change that six years had wrought in him. Two major personages from *DAVID COPPERFIELD* reappear in the book, but totally transformed. Dickens's father, who had been the model for the jolly, kindly Wilkins Micawber, now figures in the guise of William Dorrit, querulous, conceited, and supremely selfish. The other example is even more closely identified with the author's experience. The girl with whom he had been violently in love in his youth, the coquettish Maria Beadnell, appeared in *DAVID COPPERFIELD* as Dora Spenlow. Now a married woman, she wrote to Dickens in February, 1855, and suggested a renewal of friendship. Being at the nadir of his domestic misery, Dickens plunged into a sentimental reverie and arranged a clandestine meeting with Maria. His disillusionment was ironically comic: the once-fascinating girl was not only middle-aged but also fat, loquacious, and silly. After escaping from her absurd blandishments, he gave vent to his rueful disappointment by depicting her in full and ludicrous detail as Flora Finch, whose elephantine flirtation embarrasses the bashful Arthur Clennam.

To recapitulate, then, it may be said that the three dark novels in their preoccupation with social injustice and administrative incompetence clearly reflected political conditions which were annoying Dickens and his friends at the time. In their technical experiments in style and plot, their propagandist seriousness, their satirical but realistic portrayal of upper-class persons, their attempts to probe passionate emotional complexities, they betrayed the influence of rival novelists. All these tendencies, by restraining the natural exuberance and capriciousness that animated Dickens's previous works, contributed to an impression of somber dejection. Conjointly with these external influences, however, the author's personal emotional crisis must be taken into account. It probably did much to motivate his redundant portrayals of incompatible marriages and his preoccupation with the possibility of love between middle-aged men and young women,

and it may have inspired also his anxious concern about the status of illegitimate children. More generally, it provided the sense of frustration and crass fatalism that pervaded the novels.

Definitely, his emergence from the dark period coincides with several decisive events in his private life. In April, 1857, he met and fell violently in love with eighteen-year-old Ellen Ternan, and a year later he officially separated from his wife and installed Miss Ternan in her stead. During the same month, he had found an adequate outlet for his restless energy and dramatic love of power by beginning his series of professional public readings. Thus restored to serenity, he commenced *A TALE OF TWO CITIES* with little of the agony and indecision which he had repeatedly expressed while writing the three previous novels.

So far as any application to the Shakespearian problem is concerned, the present inquiry tends to indicate that all the three types of influence may have affected the changing moods of his plays. Perhaps, however, the parallel between the two authors may be more safely expressed in a general statement. Shakespeare was thirty-seven when he entered upon his dark period. Dickens was thirty-nine. It is the age when earlier enthusiasms begin to ring hollow, when success proves less delightful in fulfillment than it was in anticipation, when a new generation begins to sneer at one as "out of date." A sort of imaginative and emotional menopause makes the author realize that the subtle thief of youth hath stolen on his wing a disquieting number of years. The present study has been concerned, then, with what happens to an author as he reaches middle age.

by Charles Allen

THE ADVANCE GUARD

1

THIS is of the little magazines and of the influence these non-commercial advance-guard periodicals have exerted on our literature since 1912.

The best of our little magazines have stood, from 1912 to the present, defiantly in the front ranks of the battle for a mature literature. They have helped fight this battle by being the first to present such writers as Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, T. S. Eliot—by first publishing, in fact, about eighty per cent¹ of our most important post-1912 critics, novelists, poets, and story-tellers. Further, they have introduced and sponsored every noteworthy literary “movement” or “school” that has made its appearance in America during the past thirty years.

There have been, conservatively estimated, over six hundred little magazines since 1912. Of course many have been pale, harmless creatures. Fewer than one hundred of them have taken a decisive part in the battle for modern literature, or have sought persistently to discover good new artists, or to promote the early work of talented innovators, or to sponsor literary movements. Many of the six hundred magazines have been abortive, some lacking definable purpose, others editorial discrimination, and still others plain common sense. Some, such as John Malcolm Brinnin's short-lived *Prelude*, irresponsibly followed the will o' the wisp of novelty for novelty's sake.

I propose to discuss here only a few of the six hundred. This story, for the most part, is to be that of the valiant warriors whose

¹See Appendix I.

primary intention was to print the best of the new artists without regard for financial or social consequences.

Any periodical whose motivating purpose is first of all to present artistic work by unknown or relatively unknown writers may be called a little magazine. Little magazines are willing to lose money, to court ridicule, to ignore public taste, willing to do almost anything—steal, beg, or undress in public—rather than sacrifice their right to print the best of an unknown Faulkner or Hemingway. Such periodicals are, therefore, non-commercial by intent, for their altruistic ideal usually rules out the hope of money profit. No doubt little magazine editors would welcome a circulation of a million or two, but they know that their magazines will appeal to but a "little" group, generally not more than a thousand persons.

To the extent that they are not money-minded, such reviews as *The Sewanee Review*, *The Southern Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *The Yale Review* and *The Virginia Quarterly Review* may be considered "little." Yet these excellent quarterlies are not little magazines. Intelligent, dignified, critical representatives of an intelligent, dignified, critical minority, they are conscious of a serious responsibility which will not permit them the freedom to experiment or often to seek out unknown writers.

Many editors now contend that *advance guard* is a better name for their magazines than *little*. Coming into use during the First World War, the term did not refer to the size of the magazines, nor to their literary contents, nor to the fact that they usually did not pay for contributions. What the word designated above everything else was a limited group of intelligent readers: to be such a reader one had to understand the aims of the particular schools of literature that the magazines represented, had to be interested in learning about dadaism, vorticism, expressionism, and surrealism. In a sense, therefore, the word *little* is vague and even unfairly derogatory.

The commercial publishers—the large publishing houses and the big "quality" magazines—are the rear guard. In a few instances

they are the rear guard because their editors are conservative in taste, are incapable of immediately recognizing good new writing; but more frequently the commercial publishers are the rear guard because their editors will accept a writer only after the advance guard has proved that he is, or can be made, commercially profitable. Whatever the reason for their backwardness, few commercial houses or magazines of the past thirty years can claim the honor of having served the advance-guard banner: they have discovered and sponsored only about twenty per cent² of our post-1912 writers; they have done nothing to initiate the new literary groups. To their credit, it may be said that they have ultimately accepted any author, no matter how experimental, after he has been talked about for a period of years—sometimes a good many years.

II

One should remember that there were advance-guard magazines before 1912. The parent of the American little magazine was *The Dial* (1840-44), edited by Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Because it always held its standards high *The Dial* never obtained over three hundred subscribers, despite such contributors as Thoreau, Emerson, William Ellery Channing, and Theodore Parker. Most of our nineteenth-century periodicals were not very inspiring, however. Besides *The Dial* only four deserve serious recognition: Henry Clapp's *Saturday Press* (1858-66), and in the 90's the Chicago *Chap Book*, *Lark*, and *Mlle. New York*. The first decade of the twentieth century was just as barren as the nineteenth.

I do not wish to conjecture on the social, economic, and artistic forces that made for the "renaissance" that showed its first beginnings around 1910. But I do wish to point out that the little magazines were born to give our new literature a means of publication. In 1912 Harriet Monroe succeeded in starting her famous *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. Floyd Dell and Max

²See Appendix I.

Eastman decided to make the *Masses* a rebel literary magazine, and the *Poetry Journal* was founded in Boston. These and others that followed them in 1913 and 1914 were consciously established to promote a regenerative literature. Little-magazine editors knew that there were already writers such as Robinson, Masters, and Sara Teasdale, poets with much to say provided they could find a place to publish consistently. And the editors suspected that there were many unknowns who could be encouraged to write if they were offered a fair chance of publication. How right the editors were we now know from the record of *Poetry*, *Glebe*, *Others*, *The Masses*, *The Little Review*, and other little magazines of those opening "renaissance" years. Besides firmly establishing the reputations of Edgar Lee Masters, Amy Lowell, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Sara Teasdale, and others who had received only the slightest attention before 1912, the little magazines during their first three years presented such previously almost unknown names as Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, John Reed, John Gould Fletcher, Maxwell Bodenheim, and Robert Frost.

It is impossible here to do more than mention the influence of individual periodicals in shaping the literary milieu between the two great wars; impossible even to outline the fascinating and often incredible human stories that explain the accomplishments of the advance guard—stories sometimes of tragedy, more often of high comedy, nearly always of courageous sacrifice. For the sake of convenience, one can place our post-1912 little magazines into six major categories—poetical, regional, leftist, experimental, critical, and eclectic. One can make such divisions provided that he does not take them too seriously.

Among the more important little magazines devoted exclusively or largely to poetry we might name: *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* (1912-), *Poetry Journal* (1912-18), *Contemporary Verse* (1916-26), *The Fugitive* (1922-25), *The Measure* (1921-26), *Glebe* (1913-15), *Others* (1915-19), *Palms* (1923-37), *Voices* (1921-), and *Smoke* (1931-37). One can safely estimate that

at least ninety-five per cent^{*} of our post-1912 poets were not only introduced by such magazines but that they remained the primary outlets for most of our poets.

January, 1911, to April, 1917, are the dates of the socialist *Masses*, a magazine which, historically, must be considered a landmark. The first important literary voice of the left wingers, the *Masses*, especially under the editorship of Max Eastman and Floyd Dell (1912-17), was the American inspiration for the so-called "proletarian" movement of the sociological-minded '30's. The other famous left-wing little magazines are *The Liberator* (1918-24), and *The Partisan Review* (1934-). During the '30's there were many ephemeral voices such as *Anvil*, *Left*, *Blast*, *The Monthly Review*, *Left-Front*, *The Magazine*, *Windsor Quarterly*, *New Quarterly*, etc.

In 1915 the Midwest finally decided to revolt from the domination of Eastern publishing influences. This domination usually took one of two forms, demanding either that the midland artist warp his material to conform to a preconceived notion of what represented the Midwest, or that he burlesque his native soil for the amusement of the East. John T. Frederick's *Midland*, published in Iowa City from 1915 to 1933, was the first coherent voice to insist on the artist's right to present as he honestly saw it the spirit of the vast region between the Alleghenies and the Rockies. The right to truthfully interpret the cultural entity which the writer best knows became the ideal of several other little magazines in the Midwest, Southwest and Far West. Such excellent quarterlies as *The Frontier* (1920-39), *The Texas Review* (1915-24), *The Southwest Review* (1924-), *The Prairie Schooner* (1927-), and *The New Mexico Quarterly Review* (1931-) derive their inspiration from the *Midland*.

The advance-guard magazines devoted to experimentalism in one form or another have been more numerous than any other type. They are the magazines that have introduced the literary movements or schools (imaging, dadaism, surrealism, etc.); they

*See Appendix I.

are the magazines that have cast a sympathetic eye on the more radical departures from conventional realism (stream of thought, the use of style as an instrument for setting the tone and creating atmosphere, etc.), they are the magazines, in short, that are concerned with widening the boundaries of an age dedicated to photographic realism and naturalism. There have been literally scores of these periodicals and I name only the most important: *The Little Review* (1914-29), *Broom* (1921-24), *Secession* (1922-24), *The Reviewer* (1921-26), *The Double Dealer* (1921-26), *The Dial* (1920-29), *This Quarter* (1925-34) and *transition* (1927-40). The poetry magazines that have been primarily experimental are: *Poetry*, *Glebe*, *Others*, and *Fugitive*. One might also possibly catalogue as experimental little-magazine activities James Laughlin's New Directions Press (1936-), and Dorothy Norman's fat semi-annual volume, *Twice A Year* (1938-).

A fifth group of little magazines specialized in criticism and reviewing, a group represented by *The Hound and Horn* (1927-34), and *The Symposium* (1930-34). These reviews were designed as outlets for the intense, brilliant, and mannered critics, of whom T. S. Eliot, John Crowe Ransom, and R. P. Blackmur are fair representatives. Like *The Southern Review* (1935-42) and the present-day *Kenyon Review* (1938-), neither of which can be considered little magazines, *Hound and Horn* and *Symposium* inherited much of their temperament from *The Dial* (1920-29) and from T. S. Eliot's British *Criterion* (1924-38), magazines that admired acuteness, urbanity, and sometimes preciousness.

The "eclectics" include some of our most estimable magazines, magazines open to most of the literary currents but generally favoring straight, realistic writing and more or less conventional structural patterns; they are the spiritual heirs of the commercial *Smart Set*, whose years of splendor were between 1912 and 1924. *The Seven Arts* (1916-17), *Story* (1931-), and a group of Midwest magazines founded since 1934—*American Prefaces*, *Accent*,

University Review, *Little Man*, *Diogenes*—are some of the most important of this catholic group.

The individual stories of the magazines that have been mentioned deserve to be written, and someday they will be the subject of a fascinating volume. One of these stories, necessarily an abbreviated thumb-nail sketch, should be told here, for it might contribute to a more concrete understanding of the aims and functions, merits and defects, of a typical little magazine. Let us look at the experimental *Double Dealer* for a moment.

The literary revival that began to grow in the East and Midwest in 1911 and 1912 did not take firm root in the South until around 1920. January, 1921, saw the first issue of the sprightly New Orleans *Double Dealer*, and a month later the *Reviewer* made its first appearance in Richmond, Virginia.

The *Double Dealer* began by announcing itself "A National Magazine of the South." The editor, Julius Weis Friend, and his associates, Basil Thompson, Albert Goldstein, and John McClure, were out to deceive both the nation and the South "by speaking the truth." It took some time for the editors to determine exactly where to find the truth, however. At first they told the world (and they did have a worldwide, if scattered, circulation) that they had "no policy whatever but that of printing the very best material they could procure, regardless of popular appeal, moral or immoral stigmata, conventional or unconventional technique, new theme or old." They were also worried about the bog into which Southern culture and literature had sunk since the days of the Civil War. In June, 1921, *The Double Dealer* remarked:

It is high time, we believe, for some doughty, clear-visioned penman to emerge from the sodden marshes of Southern literature. We are sick to death of the treacly sentimentalities with which our well-intentioned lady fictioneers regale us. The old traditions are no more. New peoples, customs prevail. The Confederacy has long since been dissolved. A storied realm of dreams, lassitude, pleasure, chivalry and the Nigger no longer exists. We have our Main Street here, as elsewhere.

This call for a regional Southern literature continued spasmodically until early in 1922. But gradually the editors found their true vision, a vision which they had half glimpsed from the beginning, for in that first issue they took the responsibility of appraising the existent magazines, finding that they approved only of *The Dial*, *The Pagan*, *The Little Review*, and *The Yale Review*. All of these periodicals except *The Yale Review* were after experimental writing, and so, by giving these magazines a blessing, the editors were revealing the direction in which *The Double Dealer* was to travel from 1922 onwards.

But even during the first year a great deal of experimental writing was published—and most of it did not come from the South. The conventional Southern realism was comparatively unimportant and thin. The work of Sherwood Anderson, Alfred Kreymborg, Babette Deutsch, Maxwell Bodenheim, and Lola Ridge gave the magazine its fire.

After the first year the periodical definitely found its true interest. It became a review that took its place alongside *The Dial* in establishing the early work of the 1920 experimentalists. We find many pages by Hart Crane, Edmund Wilson, Malcolm Cowley, Jean Toomer, John Crowe Ransom, Robert Penn Warren, Donald Davidson, Allen Tate, Ernest Hemingway, and others.

Though the little-magazine story has never been told with accuracy or thoroughness, one is surprised that the few sketchy articles which have been done on the subject have failed to give *The Double Dealer* full credit for its work. Certainly it was a little magazine of great merit, one of the foremost leaders of the '20's. Even Jay B. Hubbell*, when discussing Southern magazines in 1934, failed to appreciate the place of *The Double Dealer*. And the Southern commentators have had nothing to say of the three men who managed to recognize some of the best work of their time.

The chief editor and founder, Julius Weis Friend, was born in

*Hubbell, Jay B., "Southern Magazines," *Culture in the South*, edited by W. T. Couch. University of North Carolina Press, 1934.

1896 in New Orleans, where he has lived most of his life. After serving in France for sixteen months during the first World War, he returned to New Orleans to establish his magazine and to try his hand at writing. After editing *The Double Dealer* he contributed essays and reviews to various magazines and newspapers. Later, during the '30's, he co-authored three philosophical volumes: *Science and the Spirit of Man*, *The Unlimited Community*, and *What Science Really Means*. His philosophical interpretation of Western history, *The Odyssey of the Idea*, appeared in 1942. This is the man who wished to drive a "pile in the artistic stagnation which has been our portion since the Civil War," who at first thought in terms of regionalism but who later discovered that he was one of the chief editors encouraging the experimentalists.

Friend had the assistance of the poet Basil Thompson, who served in the capacity of associate editor until his untimely death early in 1924. Albert Goldstein was an associate editor for a time. And there was also John McClure, the man who wrote most of the excellent *Double Dealer* book reviews, the same John McClure who later gained wide fame as a poet and as book critic on the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*.

The year 1922 was the magazine's great year: the magazine definitely broke with its regional aspirations and decided to sponsor experimental writing. It was the year when the general content of the review reached its highest level of excellence. It was the year when all but one of its important discoveries were printed.

The Double Dealer's first introduction of a writer came in May, 1922, with Ernest Hemingway's "A Divine Gesture." This short, two page sketch has never been re-published and there is no reason why it should be. It is a mildly amusing but slight bit of information about an experience that the Lord God and Gabriel once had in the Garden of Eden. The next issue included the second Hemingway publication, a tough little quatrain, printed

at the bottom of a page that held a poem written by another man who was to become famous.

This new writer was William Faulkner. The poetic "Portrait" of June, 1922, tells in six stanzas of two brave young lovers who walk "clear with frank surprise," and, "profound in youth," talk of "careful trivialities." The rapid accumulation of such mediocre and sentimental verse as "Portrait" resulted in Faulkner's first volume, *The Marble Faun*.

Jean Toomer and Thornton Wilder appeared for the first time in September, 1922. Toomer, in a one page sketch, writes about a soul called "Nora." Wilder's "Sentences," later to appear in *Cabala*, is a brief piece, probably published because the editors recognized an unusual style.

The October issue contained two poems, "Corymba" and "Dryad," by Donald Davidson, his first appearance outside *The Fugitive*. The November issue offered verse by John Crowe Ransom, and within the next few months Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, and most of the other *Fugitive* poets were appearing frequently.

Hart Crane, Paul Eldridge, Matthew Josephson, Elizabeth Coatsworth, Malcolm Cowley, Edmund Wilson, and Kenneth Fearing also published some of their early work in *The Double Dealer*, though only Fearing appeared here for the first time (1923).

The Double Dealer, though it printed good criticism and book reviews, focused most of its energy on the unearthing of new poetry and fiction. Often it was purposely interested in encouraging a new writer rather than in the quality of his work. Consequently the magazine piled high its record of "discoveries," (whom we need not mention, for they have been long forgotten) and filled many of its pages with second rate poetry and stories. We can submit in the editors' defense one inescapable fact: they clearly recognized a most important function of the little magazine —that of encouraging unknown writers.

The Double Dealer issued its last number in May, 1926. The

editors felt that they could no "longer give the requisite time to it."⁵

The Double Dealer, along with *Fugitive*, stands head and shoulders above the other Southern little magazines. The one discovered two of our best novelists, Hemingway and Faulkner, the other brought to fame a round half dozen of our best present-day poets and critics. Both magazines can stand in the front rank with their more widely chronicled Northern brothers.

Each of the six groups of periodicals that we have mentioned contributed valuably to a regenerative literature. Perhaps those magazines devoted to the experimental philosophies and techniques, magazines such as *The Double Dealer* and *The Little Review*, have most clearly performed the advance-guard function. The regionalists or proletarians might, and sometimes did, attain recognition without little-magazine help but the experimentalists rarely could rely on such fortune.

Though the periodicals mentioned published a good deal of the early work of many of our writers, they did not actually discover many of them. Most of the reviews printed for the first time a modest two or three. *The Dial*, with its Albert Halper and Louis Zukofsky, is typical. *Poetry*, *Story*, *Fugitive* and *The Double Dealer* are the exceptions. *Poetry* has an impressive list that includes the names of many of our best poets. *The Double Dealer* first printed five important persons, and *Fugitive* first published Donald Davidson, Robert Penn Warren, Laura Riding and Merrill Moore. None of *Story*'s many finds have yet had time to establish solid reputations.

In what publications, then, did the writers, 80 percent of whom first appeared in the advance-guard reviews, receive their starts? They began their careers in the little, little magazines, in the very short-lived, often wild-eyed periodicals, the ones such as *Blues*

⁵*The Double Dealer* cost on the average of \$300 per issue, and "always ran a deficit over and above subscriptions and advertising, which was made up by donations from about forty individuals. Payment for material published started out at the rate of one cent per word for prose and fifty cents a line for verse. This was discontinued after about six issues due to lack of funds, and for the remainder of the five years no payment was made for material." The average circulation was 1,500.

(first published by James Farrell and Erskine Caldwell), or *Bruno's Bohemia* (Hart Crane). As I have suggested, there have been hundreds of these very ephemeral voices, some of which have been provocative, most of which have been unutterably dreary. Almost every one turns up a considerable number of discoveries. Once in a long time one of the discoveries manages to force himself to the attention of the more respectable little magazines, and, after a time, he may even attain a reputation that need no longer rely on the moneyless blessings of the advance guard.

III

One may speak casually of an Ernest Hemingway's receiving his first half dozen publications in little magazines and thereby gaining a reputation which the commercial publishers were eager to exploit. But let us be more specific. Hemingway publishes his first story in *The Double Dealer* in 1922. Let us assume that the editor and a few other people read this story and like it. These people talk enthusiastically of the story and perhaps twice as many read the next Hemingway offering. Soon many admirers are talking—a snowball is rolling in the advance guard. A half dozen little magazines are printing Hemingway stories and he has several thousand readers. An obscure, non-commercial press in Paris publishes his first thin volume, *Three Stories and Ten Poems*. The snowball rolls into the Scribners office. Finally in 1926 comes *The Sun Also Rises*. A writer has been started on the road to success—by the little magazines and their readers.

Though the best of our writers receive a wide enough acceptance through the little magazines to make them sought after by the conservative periodicals and publishing houses, one cannot help wondering what might have happened if these writers had not been offered a little magazine's encouragement. Many a Hart Crane or Sherwood Anderson might never have been heard from had there been no advance guard; for seeing one's work in print arouses a man's hope, stimulates further effort. This is what Stephen Vincent Benét has in mind when he writes: "The little

magazines, of course, are absolutely indispensable. They give the beginning writer his first important step—a chance to see how the thing looks in print. And there's nothing as salutary." This, indeed, is the primary justification.

Further, the little magazines have had a great deal to do with the advancing of literary movements. Imagism, cubism, futurism, expressionism, dadaism, surrealism, vertigralism—all of the important movements came to this country through the pages of *Poetry*, *The Little Review* and *transition*.

Despite their promotion of the best of the new writers and literary movements the advance-guard magazines are easy targets for caustic ridicule. The most frequent accusation is that they do not print good writing. Of course there is much truth in this, and implied in the truth lies much of the strength and weakness of the little magazine. No sensible person can take seriously the egregious nonsense that has filled many of the pages of *The Little Review*, *transition* or *Broom*. Even the best magazines, *Poetry* and *The Dial*, for instance, have frequently lost their critical balance, been deluded into bestowing encomiums on many an upstart whose only virtue was a slick facade of novelty. The alacrity with which editors chase after fool's gold is the ubiquitous weakness that plagues the little-magazine ideal. Our knowledge of *The Double Dealer* proves, however, that the editor may deliberately accept material which he knows to be second-rate, for he may see the marks of a genuine talent behind the stumbling words or unsteady structure of a poem or story. In accepting a manuscript to give encouragement the editor hopes that his discovery will soon outgrow his awkwardness. More often than not awkwardness is not outgrown; thus the files of the little reviews lie heavy with frozen material that probably never interested anyone except the author and the hopeful though probably skeptical editor. And so, though one must agree that the little magazines are filled with many worthless attempts, one must also grant that there is justification in printing fledgling literary efforts. Nor must one forget that many of the more significant pieces of

our time have found their way into the little magazines. The people who suggest that the little magazines do not publish literature might notice the "thanks for permission to reprint" acknowledgments in the fore-pages of almost any first volume of reputable stories, poetry and criticism.

Some persons also believe that the advance-guard editors have a tendency to favor the "established" little-magazine writers over the meritorious unknown. True enough. Little-magazine editors are not free from vanity or oblivious of the desire for prestige. They do favor the "name" writers of their own circle. Yet they do not grant them the same favors that the commercial editor is likely to give his writers. The little magazine does not usually pay for its contributions, is not dependent on advertising, and can ignore names to a far greater extent than the commercial publisher. Several Hemingway stories were refused, perhaps unwisely, by little-magazine editors in those first days of Hemingway glory.

Hostile observers also berate the "exhibitionism," "pretension," "snobbishness" and "adolescence" that some reviews incline toward. Exhibitionism there is, nor need one look far to discover pretension and snobbishness. But all of these words connote, in varying degrees, conscious or semi-conscious attitudinizing; yet such conscious posturing is rare, not only in literature but in any artistic or mental activity.

However, when one comes to the charge that the little magazines are often adolescent he is forced to grant that the critics have much firm ground under their feet. For if fear and uncertainty are signs of immaturity, as the psychologists contend, then many little-magazine contributors, and not a few editors, are immature. The pioneer, whether he be the wielder of the broad axe, the explorer in the deep jungle of the unconscious mind, the rebel economic theorist, or the innovator of literary surrealism is frequently a slightly maladjusted person. Often it is a feeling of insecurity that has driven him to pioneering, and it is insecurity, combined with an envy for the respectable,

that leads the pioneer and rebel unknowingly, and sometimes knowingly, to apologize for his feeling of insecurity with considerable bizarre behavior and intellectual display—display which is designed to emphasize his uniqueness, his superiority. Thus a *Little Review* can convince itself of its ineffable critical discernment by insisting, in all high seriousness, that the dadaists and the machine reveal many of the highest aspirations of man. And *transition* can convince itself of its penetrating insight into the nature of man and the supernatural by talking of divine currents to which man must attune himself. One does not sense pretension or exhibitionism here, but rather a lack of urbanity, an insecure mind.

It is this unsavory aspect of the artistic rebel that has drawn a flood of ridicule and contempt upon the little magazines. One does not need an alert mind, no more alert than that of the contented doctor of philosophy, nor than those of such fallen monuments as Wyndham Lewis, Max Eastman, or Van Wyck Brooks, to sniff out the weaknesses that show through a good deal of the little-magazine activity. The same weaknesses, though less exaggerated, brand not a few of the most mature artists of any age. Fortunately for the world, civilized human beings can afford to ignore a good deal of adolescence if courage and daring and genuine accomplishment are also present.

All such comment is overshadowed, however, by much more important history. In 1912, in 1920, in 1930, the little magazines were the innovators, and today, in 1943, they are still the innovators. A society needs ever-fresh interpretations and new writers to make these interpretations. Little-magazine editors believe that a Hemingway or a Sandburg or a Faulkner may finally lose his power or die and that younger artists must be constantly encouraged. This is why advance-guard editors sought out Erskine Caldwell, Albert Halper, and James Farrell in 1929, why they discovered most of the so-called proletarian writers of the '30's, and why, in these early '40's, they are still introducing new artists.

APPENDIX I

The conjecture that about 80 percent of our post-1912 writers found their first publications in the little magazines is based on an investigation of the first publications of 100 of our most prominent critics, poets, novelists, and story writers of the last forty years. I selected 100 writers for investigation, writers generally accepted as representative of the various literary and philosophical outlooks. Through biographies, autobiographies, and a questionnaire, I obtained information regarding 83 of the 100. Of these 83, 23 published before 1912, and I shall therefore reserve for them a separate listing at the end of this appendix. This leaves 60 post-1912 writers, whose names and places of first publication are listed in the following table.

EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOLLOWING TABLE:
 cm, commercial magazine; lm, little magazines; pp, private printing; n, newspaper.

NOTE: Although most college publications can hardly be considered as little magazines, *The Harvard Advocate* is included in this list.

NAME	MEDIUM		DATE
Anderson, Maxwell	<i>New Republic</i>	(cm)	1917
Anderson, Sherwood	<i>Little Review</i>	(lm)	1915
Arvin, Newton	<i>The Freeman</i>	(lm)	1921
Auslander, Joseph	<i>Harvard Advocate</i>	(lm)	1917
Benét, Stephen Vincent	<i>New Republic</i>	(cm)	?
Blackmur, R. P.	<i>Poetry</i>	(lm)	1925
Bogan, Louise	<i>New Republic</i>	(cm)	1921
Boyle, Kay	<i>Poetry</i>	(lm)	1920
Brinnin, John Malcolm	<i>Prelude</i>	(lm)	?
Burke, Kenneth	<i>Others</i>	(lm)	?
Caldwell, Erskine	<i>Blues</i>	(lm)	1929
Calverton, V. F.	<i>Current History</i>	(cm)	1925
Chamberlain, John	<i>New York Times</i>	(n)	1926
Cowley, Malcolm	<i>Challenge</i>	(lm)	1915
Crane, Hart	<i>Bruno's Bohemia</i>	(lm)	1922
Davidson, Donald	<i>Fugitive</i>	(lm)	1924
De Jong, David Cornel	<i>Forge or Poetry</i>	(lm)	1929
Dillon, George	<i>The Measure</i>	(lm)	1924
Dos Passos, John	<i>New Republic</i>	(cm)	1916
Eliot, T. S.	<i>Poetry</i>	(lm)	1915

NAME	MEDIUM	DATE
Farrell, James	<i>Blues</i>	(lm) 1929
Faulkner, William	<i>Double Dealer</i>	(lm) 1922
Fearing, Kenneth	<i>Double Dealer</i>	(lm) 1923
Fitts, Dudley	<i>Harvard Advocate</i>	(lm) 1923
Fletcher, John Gould	<i>The New Freeman</i> (London)	(lm) 1913
Frank, Waldo	?	(n) ?
Gregory, Horace	<i>Poetry</i>	(lm) 1924
Halper, Albert	<i>Dial</i>	(lm) 1929
Hemingway, Ernest	<i>Double Dealer</i>	(lm) 1922
Johnson, Josephine	<i>Poetry World</i>	(lm) ?
Laughlin, James	<i>Atlantic Monthly</i>	(cm) ?
MacLeish, Archibald	<i>Yale Review</i>	(cm) 1913 or 1914
MacLeod, Norman	<i>New Masses</i>	(lm) 1928
Miller, Henry	<i>The Black Cat</i>	(lm) 1912
Moore, Marianne	<i>The Egoist</i> (London)	(lm) 1915
Moore, Merrill	<i>Fugitive</i>	(lm) 1922
Munson, Gorham	<i>The Methodist Review</i>	? 1917
Porter, Katherine Anne	<i>Century Magazine</i>	(cm) 1923
Phillips, William	<i>The Symposium</i>	(lm) 1933
Rahv, Philip	<i>The Left</i>	(lm) 1931
Ransom, John Crowe	<i>The Independent</i>	(cm) 1916
Riding, Laura	<i>Fugitive</i>	(lm) 1924
Roberts, Elizabeth Madox	<i>Sunset Magazine</i>	(cm) 1915
Rosenfeld, Paul	<i>New Republic</i>	(cm) 1915
Rukeyser, Muriel	<i>N. Y. Herald-Tribune Bks.</i>	(n) 1931
Seldes, Gilbert	<i>Forum</i>	(cm) ?
Steinbeck, John	<i>North American Review</i>	(cm) ?
Stevens, Wallace	?	(lm) ?
Suckow, Ruth	<i>Midland</i>	(lm) 1918
Toomer, Jean	<i>Double Dealer</i>	(lm) ?
Troy, William	<i>Liberator</i>	(lm) 1921
Van Doren, Mark	<i>Smart Set</i>	(cm) 1915
Warren, Robert Penn	<i>Fugitive</i>	(lm) 1923
Wescott, Glenway		(pp) 1920
Wilder, Thornton	<i>Double Dealer</i>	(lm) 1923
Wilson, Edmund	<i>Poetry or Liberator</i>	(lm) 1919
Winters, Yvor	<i>Youth</i>	(lm) 1920
Wylie, Elinor	<i>Poetry</i>	(lm) 1918
Zabel, Morton Dauwen	<i>Art and Archaeology</i>	? 1925
Zukofsky, Louis	<i>Dial</i>	(lm) 1928

Of these 60 writers 41, or approximately 70 percent, clearly published first in the little magazines. But at least 13 others

of the 60 who did not first appear in little magazines published most of their early work in little magazines.⁶ These 13 are:

Arvin, Newton	Porter, Katherine Anne
Benét, Stephen Vincent	Ransom, John Crowe
Bogan, Louise	Roberts, Elizabeth Madox
Dos Passos, John	Rukeyser, Muriel
Frank, Waldo	Van Doren, Mark
Laughlin, James	Zabel, Morton Dauwen
Munson, Gorham	

This would indicate that about 90 percent of our post-1912 writers found a majority of their first readers through the pages of the little magazines. But did not some of the 41 who first appeared in little magazines go almost immediately into the commercials? As I leafed through the little magazines I found the first half dozen or so Sherwood Anderson stories, the first half dozen works of almost every writer listed as first publishing in the little magazines. And so we must accept our 90 percent figure as the best obtainable. We might, however, deduct 10 percent as a possible margin of error. We are thus left with a final guess—that 80 percent of all our post-1912 writers developed at the little-magazine school.

It was asserted earlier that perhaps 95 percent of all our post-1912 poets came to our attention through the little magazine. Among our 60 writers who are, or were at the beginnings of their careers, primarily poets we find:

1. Anderson, Maxwell	(cm)	14. Dillon, George	(lm)
2. Arvin, Newton	(lm)	15. Eliot, T. S.	(lm)
3. Auslander, Joseph	(lm)	16. Fearing, Kenneth	(lm)
4. Benét, Stephen Vincent	(cm)	17. Fitts, Dudley	(lm)
5. Blackmur, R. P.	(lm)	18. Gregory, Horace	(lm)
6. Bogan, Louise	(lm)	19. Johnson, Josephine	(lm)
7. Boyé, Kay	(lm)	20. MacLeish, Archibald	(lm)
8. Brinnin, John Malcolm	(lm)	21. MacLeod, Norman	(lm)
9. Burke, Kenneth	(lm)	22. Moore, Marianne	(lm)
10. Cowley, Malcolm	(lm)	23. Moore, Merrill	(lm)
11. Crane, Hart	(lm)	24. Ransom, John Crowe	(cm)
12. Davidson, Donald	(lm)	25. Riding, Laura	'lm)
13. De Jong, David Cornel	(lm)	26. Roberts, Elizabeth Madox	(cm)

This is a conservative estimate, based on research and written statements from the above authors.

27. Rukeyser, Muriel	(n)	32. Wilson, Edmund	(lm)
28. Stevens, Wallace	(lm)	33. Winters, Yvor	(lm)
29. Van Doren, Mark	(cm)	34. Wylie, Elinor	(lm)
30. Warren, Robert Penn	(lm)	35. Zabel, Morton Dauwen ...	(?)
31. Wescott, Glenway	(pp)	36. Zukofsky, Louis	(lm)

Of these 36, 8 did not first publish in the little magazines, but everyone of these 8 published most of his early work in little magazines, and only through little magazines gained national attention. Thus a total of 100 percent is obtained for the poets. Subtracting 5 percent, a too generous margin of error, one may conjecture that about 95 percent of our better poets were introduced by the little magazines.

That nearly all of our poets not only first publish but continue to publish most of their work in the little magazines is not surprising. Serious verse appeals only to a highly selected group. The vast majority of commercial-magazine readers is embarrassed and humbled before a poem. Commercial magazines, therefore, do not dare print much verse, least of all a poem by a completely unknown writer.

This is all that can be said in reference to the little magazine's place in establishing the reputations of the post-1912 writers. These conjectures are based on the best information available, and upon a close scrutiny of all of the more important little magazines. Only a prolonged and expensive study would lead to a more definitive analysis, and it is doubtful whether the findings would differ appreciably from the ones here established.

There remains only to notice where the 23 writers who first published between about 1890 and 1912 got their starts.

NAME	MEDIUM	DATE
Brooks, Van Wyck	(pp)	1908
Cabell, James Branch	<i>International Magazine</i>	(cm)
Dell, Floyd	<i>Davenport (Ia.) Times</i>	(n)
Dreiser, Theodore	<i>Everymonth</i>	(lm)
Eastman, Max	{ <i>International Journal</i> { <i>of Ethics</i>	?
Ficke, Arthur Davison	<i>Smart Set</i>	(cm)
Fisher, Dorothy Canfield	<i>Everybody's Magazine</i>	(cm)
Frost, Robert	<i>The Independent</i>	(cm)
		1906
		1906
		1906
		1893 (?)

NAME	MEDIUM	DATE
Glasgow, Ellen	<i>Short Stories</i> *	1897
Kreymborg, Alfred	Newark (N.J.) <i>Call</i>	(n) 1902
Lewis, Sinclair	?	(cm) 1906
Lindsay, Vachel	The New York <i>Critic</i>	(cm) (?) 1905
Lovett, Robert Morss	<i>Harvard Monthly</i>	(lm) 1890
Lowell, Amy	<i>Atlantic Monthly</i>	(cm) 1910
Masters, Edgar Lee	<i>Reedy's Mirror</i>	(lm) ?
Mencken, H. L.	The <i>Optimist</i>	(lm) 1900
Millay, Edna St. Vincent	<i>Forum</i> or <i>Century</i>	(cm) ?
Pound, Ezra	?	(pp) 1908
Robinson, Edwin Arlington	<i>Gardiner Reporter Monthly</i>	(n) ?
Stein Gertrude	<i>Three Lives</i>	(pp) 1909
Teadale, Sara	<i>Reedy's Mirror</i>	(lm) ?
Van Doren, Carl	<i>Nation</i>	(cm) 1906
Wharton, Edith	<i>Scribner's</i>	(cm) ?

Only five of these 23 people, or about 22 percent, first appeared in little magazines. Truly the little-magazine era began in 1912. One must observe, however, that a number of these pre-1912 people did not actually gain any recognition until they began to publish in the post-1912 little magazines. Those who are indebted to the little magazine for establishing their reputations are: Robinson, Millay, Lindsay, Pound, Eastman, Stein, Lowell, Kreymborg, Ficke, and Floyd Dell.

MEMOIRES

MÉMOIRES. By André Maurois, New York, Editions de la maison française, 1942, 2 vols.

This autobiography was undertaken, partially at least, as a work of self-justification. The author fears that in this age of passionate hatreds, it is more than possible that his friends and enemies may hand down to posterity, totally false impressions of the man that he has been. To prevent this misunderstanding, he has decided to record his own memories and to give to the public his own conception of the personality who has become famous under the pseudonym, André Maurois.

I am not sure that he has wholly succeeded in the second of these expressed intentions. The book contains the qualities, but also the defects, of Maurois' other work. The story of a full, colorful, and incredibly successful career is narrated with all of the author's competence and charm. He writes with nostalgic longing of his childhood in Elbeuf, where his family, Alsatian Jews named Herzog, who had moved to Normandy after the German conquest of 1871, owned and operated a prosperous textile mill. We follow him through his schooling and his year of philosophy in the class of the great Chartier-Alain. We learn of the circumstances and events of his several careers as business-man, soldier, lecturer, novelist, and teacher. The more intimate aspects of his life are not neglected. The stories of his two marriages, and of the courtships which preceded them, are set down at considerable length. There are short accounts of the genesis, evolution, and composition of two or three of his more important books. But somehow the personality, the man Maurois which the preface promises to reveal, does not emerge. Of the ideas and ideals by which he has lived and for which he has worked, of his emotional conflicts and loyalties, his esthetic beliefs and his intellectual convictions, we learn next to nothing. The reader accompanies Maurois through a brilliant succession of skillfully executed activities, but learns no more of the human being who moves so expertly and so confidently across this amaz-

ingly varied series of incidents and events than did those friends and enemies referred to in the preface, who watched him in real life, and who, he fears, may now misjudge him.

The same lack of depth is evident in the background of the story. From his school-boy days in Alain's classroom to the moment of his reception into the Académie française, Maurois lived intimately with men and women of intelligence, position, wealth, and accomplishment, in France, Great Britain, and the United States. The memoir provides a kaleidoscopic picture of the vanity fair of three great nations during the first four decades of the present century. The externals of this society are described with the author's habitual felicity of expression. Rarely, however, does he reach beyond the surface of personalities and events. Despite the apparent wealth of firsthand information about men who have played critical rôles in recent history, despite Maurois' preoccupation with the European cataclysm and the circumstances which determined it, the reader will look in vain for any real understanding or interpretation of the forces, conflicts, and leaders which have brought France to her present misery and have engulfed the world in war.

It is perhaps ungrateful to lay too much stress upon these limitations, for Maurois has given us an enjoyable and honest record of his life and of the society in which he has moved. In spots, his confessions seem disarmingly sincere. One cannot fail to be impressed by the author's many-sided talents, and by his unfailing ability to carry off, with striking success, whatever he has set out to do. He earned his *license* before he was eighteen. After one year of military service he was, in time of peace, and in spite of physical handicaps, recommended for a commission. When he was twenty-three, he reorganized and brought new prosperity to the family textile industry. The year 1914 took him back to the army, where, attached as a liaison officer to British troops, he gathered the material for his first book, *Colonel Bramble*. This was the beginning of the career as novelist, biographer, lecturer, and salon figure which would lead him,

in 1939, to the Académie française. A refugee in this country since 1940, he has enjoyed considerable success as a college professor and lecturer. There can be no doubt about his abilities and his intelligence.

If one asks why this man, so favored by the gods, appears to have fallen short of greatness in his literary efforts, the answer may be found in the admonishment of Alain, who warned the schoolboy, Herzog-Maurois, against his "*redoutable facilité*." I suspect that the very ease with which he has accomplished so much that is denied to most men has prevented him from digging deeper and from leaving a literary monument of genuine significance.

STRATTON BUCK

FOUR QUARTETS

FOUR QUARTETS. By T. S. Eliot. Harcourt Brace and Company. New York.
\$2.00.

Four Quartets is a quasi-autobiographical testimony of the experience of *union with God*, or rather, its imperfect approximations in this life. At first glance, the poems appear to be a ragbag stuffed with mystical theology and practice, essays in aesthetics and English history, natural description, the War and denunciations of secularism. However, everything is pointed toward one end; every line is symbolic. For instance, in Eliot's wrestling with language, artistic craft is analogous to contemplative discipline, aesthetic experience is analogous to extasy. The other symbols work in roughly the same way. Eliot frequently uses the strict and paradoxical terminology of St. John of the Cross which gives his experiences an air of the occult; actually, they are universal and fairly common. Similar experiences are specifically described by innumerable Christian mystics, and close parallels, with crucial differences, can be found in the writings of the Buddha and Islam. My own feeling is that *union*

with God is somewhere in sight in all poetry, though it is usually rudimentary and misunderstood. *Four Quartets* is a composite of the symbolic, the didactic, and the confessional. It is probably the most powerful religious poem of the twentieth century, and certainly the most remarkable and ambitious expression of Catholic mysticism in English.

I suppose no poem has come into the world with so many critics to attend it. Both its ideas and their expression are difficult; and the reader who wants to understand them should examine the thorough explanations of Leonard Unger and J. J. Sweeney in *The Southern Review*, F. O. Matthiessen in *The Kenyon Review*, and Philip Wheelwright in *Chimera*. Here I shall limit myself to a little description and a few random suggestions. But I fear that no evaluation that skirts detailed criticism will seem very plausible.

The metrics are casual and formal. Each Quartet is laid to a single pattern. The nearest parallel I can think of is the *canzone*, in which the poet makes a long stanza of any number of lines he pleases and rhymed in any way he pleases and then repeats it. Spenser's *Prothalamium* is the famous example. The *Quartets*, however, are stanzas two hundred lines long and are divided into five parts. Each has two formal lyrics and for the rest is written in loose unrhymed iambics varying from two to seven feet. The various symbols and comments are developed thematically and in this are similar to *The Wasteland*, Pound's *Cantos*, and any number of modern poems. But the repetition of a strict metrical pattern gives the thematic poem the appearance of extreme formality.

Eliot has been censured by a number of critics, most brilliantly by John Crowe Ransom and Yvor Winters, for his loose logic and loose meters. There is no denying that the *Four Quartets* tends to be fragmentary, repetitious, and obscure. Only intuition could have determined when and why it was complete. It is significant that Pound blue-pencilled *The Wasteland* down to two thirds its original length. Here the reasons why one passage

should follow another are even less apparent. In Eliot's words "each venture is a new beginning." What is true of the whole is also true of the parts. Each individual passage seems to dissipate its concentration and drive by the very suppleness of its rhythms. The author's extreme use of adapted and parodied phrases carries this tendency to a point where his objects and situations all but disintegrate under the pressure of their allusions.

Such objections are valid but not altogether to the point because they fail to take into account what is intended. Form is nothing else but unity and integration. The structure of the *Quartets* achieves both these ends as well as one has a right to ask. Each part is written as a reflection or modification of the preceding parts. Taken together the four poems are immensely more complete and impressive than separately. The last poem, *Little Gidding*, carries the weight of all that goes before, but expresses with some finality a deeper penetration into the mystical experience. Probably the contemplative's life, as distinguished from his separate acts, can only be dramatized by a circular and thematic structure. His actions, unlike the tragic hero's, have no beginning, middle, or end: their external unity is a pawn to their unity of intention. His discipline is repetitive and his moments of ecstasy disconnected. Eliot has this one theme in all his writings and its nature in part explains the excellence of the longer poems and the relative failure of the plays.

Given such a structure, irregular meters are appropriate. The job is not to concentrate the parts in themselves, but rather to prevent their becoming so water-tight that they are unable to coalesce. The purpose of the formal lyrics is partly to accentuate the pattern and partly to effect variation and shock. By this stratagem, the reader concedes that the prosaic sections are meant to be prosaic.

The quotations have other functions besides the capture of a richer and more inspired texture than the poet could sustain on his own. They vary the tone, argue for the continuity of artistic tradition, and make for a semblance of anonymity, so that even

the most confessional passages appear impersonal. *Four Quarters* is something of a community product.

It is probably Eliot's best poem. Although nothing in it is as massive as *Gerontion* or the opening of *A Game of Chess* in *The Wasteland*, the thought is more patient and profound, the language, less quotable, is solider under its surface. The brilliant but sometimes over-stating and reckless satirist has all but vanished; when he appears he speaks with authority. Occasionally the symbols are paradoxically too personal and too general to either exist in themselves or carry sufficient symbolic meaning.

... in the nursery bedroom,
In the rank ailanthus of the April dooryard,
In the smell of grapes on the Autumn table
In the evening circle by the winter gaslight.

Fortunately such writing is rare. If I were to pick purple passages, they would be Part One of *Dry Salvages*, the unrhymed *terza rima* section in *Little Gidding*, the lyrics *The wounded surgeon plies the steel* and *The Dove descending breaks the air*, and possibly *Time and the bell have buried the day*. Even these are more moving in their context. The experience in these poems is dramatic and brutally genuine. It is one of the very few great poems in which craftsmanship and religious depth are equal.

ROBERT LOWELL

SHAKESPEARE AND THE NATURE OF MAN

SHAKESPEARE AND THE NATURE OF MAN. By Theodore Spencer. 233pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.75.

Any humble approach to Shakespeare is profitable, and any approach to be profitable must be humble. Also, it is good for writers on Shakespeare to quote copiously. Mr. Spencer meets these elementary tests and therefore whatever he does further should be viewed sympathetically. But this is less than justice. For his bold design, apparent in the title, for his comprehensive

learning, everywhere visible in the text, and for his human sympathy, a quality eradicated from many scholarly works, Mr. Spencer deserves admiration.

"It is Shakespeare's vision of life we are after, its dependence on contemporary thought, its development through dramatic form, and its universal truth." I hope Mr. Spencer will forgive a reviewer who believes that nothing about his book is more important than its testimony that there are scholars who believe in universal truth, and the corollary that special interests must be related to general. Relativism and specialism eat up their own devotees—at length in any case, but in the case of literary studies very soon—and should anyone say that general interests preclude scholarship, we must reply, let it be precluded. So much the worse for it. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. Narrow interests cannot sustain themselves in a broad world.

But this reviewer's admiration of Mr. Spencer is qualified. Shakespeare, who was not for an age, but for all time, and who does not abide our question, is such a mighty mirror of the world that he is indeed all things to all men, and even more than the Scriptures (since his breadth lacks their directed point) can be cited by devils as well as angels. Mr. Spencer's vision of life is serious and noble, and he illustrates it with quotations from Shakespeare, but I think someone with a different view might find material there also.

To illustrate the difficulty of proving anything by Shakespeare, consider the following, in which Mr. Spencer is convincing, but not so convincing as to remove all doubt. *King Lear* is the play under discussion.

"Gloucester sees everything as conditioned by the heavens, and all the right thinking people in Shakespeare's audience would have agreed with him. But when he leaves the stage, Edmund illustrates the villainy of his own nature, his cynical disregard of correspondences and inter-relations, by taking the opposite point of view from that of his father:

This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we
are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behavior,—

we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villains by necessity, fools, by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance, drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!

Later in the play Kent, an invariably 'good' character, directly contradicts this attitude: 'It is the stars,' he says, 'the stars above us, govern our conditions.' The contrast is clear throughout."

Now certainly Gloucester and Kent are sympathetic characters and Edmund a villain, but are we to infer from this that everything they say is to be considered sound and everything Edmund says false? I think not. "Good" characters, like Lear, Othello, Leontes, and Gloucester are everywhere represented as suffering from their own folly; and "bad" characters—Claudius, Iago, and Edmund—secure their advantage through intelligence, through right thinking on particular issues. Indeed, a stupid villain would scarcely prosper even temporarily. The particular acts and sayings of a subtle knave are in themselves, perhaps, more often right than wrong. The superiority of good people over bad lies not in the particular judgment, but in the general attitude. The wicked, regarding truth as a means, use it with disastrous power; the good, seeking truth as an end, blunder through error toward it. But we are not to disagree with a villain when he is right, nor praise the false opinion of a good man. Edmund is a villain, but it seems to me he "illustrates his villainy" more by lying about his brother than by telling the truth about astrology.

"There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would men observingly distil it out."

In Edmund's character there is more than a little goodness, and what is good in him is a quality shared by Mercutio, Hotspur, and, strikingly, Philip the Bastard in *King John*. Mr. Spencer

writes well of these: "His most attractive and appealing characters despise anything that is pretentious, as Mercutio despises the pretentiousness of Tybalt's Italian duelling terms, as the Bastard, in *King John*, despises the boasting of the Duke of Austria, and as Hotspur despises, among other things, the supernatural pretensions of Glendower and the artificiality of poetry." Again, "In his earlier plays, the plays of the 1590's, Shakespeare, as we know, had made various experiments in portraying the bluff, honest man, the man who, like Mercutio, Berowne, the Bastard, and Hotspur, saw through all pretensions and stood up for the facts. It is apparently a favorite type with Shakespeare, and in the 'nineties he always presents it favorably. But, as his awareness of evil expands, he sees that even this type of man may be only an appearance. For Iago is this type of man gone wrong." Precisely. One who stands up for the facts may very well go wrong, but that does not make standing up for the facts wrong.

But this "type of man" is a subtype. The larger type, which we need not here attempt to delimit too precisely, includes all who have the sort of mind we have thought of as "modern." It includes Shylock, Falstaff, and Hamlet. Had Mr. Spencer wished to push his case farther, he might have pointed out that, as a rule, the happy ending is not for this type, even when the presentation is "favorable." Secure crowns are reserved for Henry V and Fortinbras. A modern, faced with so much evidence that Shakespeare understood thoroughly the modern mind, is tempted in moods of discouragement to the hypothesis that Shakespeare rejected modernism in spite of certain favorable aspects it wears because he had weighed it in the balance and found it wanting; and to use, say, Shylock's rôle in the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* to substantiate the hypothesis; but ordinarily the modern cannot really convince himself that the author of "Hath not a Jew eyes?" had already gone back to a medieval brand of anti-Semitism, as he later returned to Stratford. Nor does Blake's remark about Milton, that he was of the devil's

party without knowing it, commend itself for application to Shakespeare. The whole matter is complex, like life itself. "Shakespeare and the Nature of Man." An apt linking. And even while wishing to stop "this side idolatry" one is tempted to think that it may be about as difficult to make a final analysis of one as the other.

MEDFORD EVANS

ONE WORLD

ONE WORLD. By Wendell L. Willkie, Simon and Schuster Inc. New York.
Paper \$1.00. Cloth \$2.00.

Any discussion of Mr. Willkie's book, the outcome of his journey by airplane in which he flew 31,000 miles and spent about thirty days on the ground visiting and talking with "hundreds of people in more than a dozen nations," and held intimate discussions with the leaders of these people, demands first a consideration of certain facts in regard to its publication.

Two reasons may be advanced for the large prepublication sales, the first being found in Mr. Willkie himself and the second in an expectancy in regard to the character of a book upon matters of such widespread interest. It may be safely concluded that if a sort of Gallup Poll could be taken among those who bought the book before it was published, it would be found that a large number of these people were interested because they had discerned in Mr. Willkie himself certain qualities likely to make what he might say upon the subject possess a peculiar value.

Among these people there is a by no means inconsiderable group who, in spite of the prominence he has attained, regard the author of *One World*, as being "Just Folks." In consequence of this attitude, they believed that they would obtain a proper perspective from which to view the men and events as revealed in a book from such a source. Akin to this, there was a second

group, who were confident that the book would be characterized by forthrightness and sincerity—that its facts would be facts, and its conclusions justly founded. Finally there was a third group composed of those who regard Mr. Willkie as a national figure of no mean importance, whose observations and opinions, whether in the field of world politics or of world economics, merit consideration.

In spite of all this, however, it is the book itself which supplies the chief reason for its popularity. Its title is a challenge. On its first page is found the categorical statement, "Our thinking in the future must be worldwide." Today, when everywhere the minds of men are turning to a consideration of what is to be after the war, *One World* comes as a timely contribution toward the establishment of a basis for such thinking. For while it is true that Mr. Willkie does not in concrete terms lay out any political and economic pattern into which the peoples of the world are to be fitted, he does envision a "new society of independent nations," in which the men and women of the world, who, be it remembered, remain men and women, whether they be of Iran or of Italy, "can live and grow, invigorated by independence and freedom." In whatever "New society" may emerge from the war primary emphasis will be laid, not upon the welfare of nations, but upon the welfare of men and women. For, says Mr. Willkie, "men and women all over the world are on the march, physically, intellectually and spiritually." He himself would no doubt admit that this is the all-important, inescapable fact derived from his journey.

It would be interesting to follow Mr. Willkie throughout this journey, by means of his strikingly simple, yet vivid and convincing narrative, and so discover how this conviction emerged. That, however, is a pleasure that should be reserved for the reader. It is sufficient to say that if we find in the book an expression of certain convictions, these convictions may be taken, not as mere humanitarian hopes, but as based upon things he saw and learned at first hand and upon the views

of men and women, important and anonymous, whose heroism and sacrifices give meaning and life to their beliefs.

Mr. Willkie's nineteen days in the air, which enabled him to travel through thirteen countries, profoundly impressed upon him the fact that the human family has now been so closely drawn together as to make its *oneness* fully apparent. His thirty days on the ground added strength to this impression, because he found from close personal contacts with people of many races and of diverse governments that human beings, since they live under enormously curtailed limitations of time and space, have been more closely drawn together in thought and ideals. He places first a common impulse toward self government, by which the many peoples and races of the earth mean the working out of their own destiny under governments selected by themselves. They all want the United Nations to win the war, because they regard such an outcome as a step toward the attainment of liberty and independence for all people. It is unfortunately true, however, that they regard an Allied victory as only a step toward a consummation of their hope for a world in which all people are free from the fear of foreign domination. There is among them a doubt as to the postwar attitude of the leading democracies toward colonies, mandates, dependences, and this doubt alone prevents their enthusiastic participation on the side of the Allies. It is important, therefore, Mr. Willkie thinks, for the democracies to make it clear that this war must mean an end to the empire of nations over other nations.

In view of their doubts it is reassuring to learn that Mr. Willkie found another common idea which has tremendous significance to us in America. This was the mixture of respect and hope with which the world looks to this country. "I came home," he says, "certain of one clear and significant fact; that there exists in the world today a gigantic reservoir of good will toward us, the American people." He justifies this conclusion as follows:

"Whether I was talking to a resident of Be'lem or Natal in

Brazil, or one toting his burden on his head in Nigeria, or a prime minister, or a king in Egypt, or a veiled woman in ancient Bagdad, or a Shah or a weaver of carpets in legendary Persia, now known as Iran, or a follower of Ataturk in those streets of Ankara which look so like the streets of our Middle Western cities, or to a stronglimbed, resolute factory worker in Russia, or to Stalin himself, or the enchanting wife of the great Generalissimo of China, or a Chinese soldier at the front, or a fur-capped hunter on the edge of the trackless forest of Siberia—whether I was talking to these people or to any others, I found that they all have one common bond, a deep friendship for the United States."

Mr. Willkie thinks this friendship imposes upon us a two-fold responsibility; first, we must keep intact the strong but delicate fabric of our way of living, and second, we must bear in mind that to destroy the liberties of other peoples is to jeopardize our own.

WILLIAM HOWARD MACKELLAR

BROWNSTONE ECLOGUES

BROWNSTONE ECLOGUES. By Conrad Aiken. 99pp. New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. \$2.00.

Conrad Aiken once said in an analysis of his own poetry, "Here I give myself away as being in quest of an absolute poetry, a poetry in which the intention is not so much to arouse an emotion or to persuade of a reality, as to employ such emotion or sense of reality (tangentially struck) with the same cool detachment with which a composer employs notes or chords." That day, Mr. Aiken took stock of himself objectively, at least as much so as any man may ever do with clarity. Then he put a conception into words which he has never departed from. Mr. Aiken's poetry is tangential and it is cool and detached. Perhaps, defined, these are all one and the same quality, for it is not the

immediate subject that counts; tangency suggests suggestion. And from there the reader is on his own. What the poem is, or can be, lies mostly with the man whose mind it enters. Perhaps, then, in a sense, all poetry is tangential. But all poetry is not cool and detached. Very little of it, I should judge. But "cool detachment," consequent upon the tangency method he employs, is an important element in Conrad Aiken's work. No other word than "cool" is more descriptive of his poetry. All over, this book possesses the coolness of certain white flowers after a rain—flowers of perfect form and architecture, whose modelling is uncensurable, but whose fragrance is faintly that of decay and lateness. A lateness that charges down upon the weary and unaware with express-train speed. And upon those who do care. It is coolly outside while being inside. It is lyrically reportorial, suggestive, and psychological; it is highly musical and colorful, its long cadences dissolving into a vague poignancy.

It is this vague poignancy that lurks like an obbligato through the entire volume, *Brown Eclogues*. One is never able to place it. As in the long poem, "The Poet In Granada," it is the paramnesiac feeling of having been where one has never been before, of having seen, felt, tasted what one has never seen, felt, tasted before. Or, in "The Census-Takers," it is the hurt bewilderment of men at all the empiric equations that will not balance. The world does not add up, and by subtle suggestion of circumstances stemming from the life of a backstreet, universality is achieved. Conrad Aiken recalls the reader into the midst of his own baffling experiences, but not sharply, not closely. He furnishes the eyes, and the pain of remembering is almost impersonal, vicarious. Even when the picture is one as strong as that in "All Death, All Love,"

"No Forest of Arden, this! The corner drugstore
spills amber and blood down the granite curb; and the cemetery,
across the street, ponders in half-light, where no more
the famous dead come, and none to preach, or bury"—

Even here, the juxtaposed brawl and the quiet, along with the

wonder of where all past years are, are only indicated, with individual inferences ready to be drawn. Tangency again. The leeway afforded by an artist who is not ambiguous, but who is objective enough to value more viewpoints than one. So much may be said for all the poetry in this volume. It is original, yet its originality is something that transcends one man and becomes a symbol, a marker at cross-roads. Coolly, and yet with a hidden passion, as ice burns, the poet looks out upon time; he sees its passage, recognizing its all-reducing element, and by power of suggestion alone throws upon the screen of the reader's mind, if not actually into his emotions, the complete bewilderment and lack of integration of twentieth century man. Like the brownstone houses that have outlived their period of glory, that have no meaning or purpose, except perhaps to shelter the dirty, the sad, and the obscene, is this sprawling creature, whose fecundity smells to the skies and who is lost, out of time, out of place, and for the most part, out of person. Conrad Aiken records him coolly, lyrically, sensuously, with a remarkable evocation, with a cold pity that is more dreadful than tears.

Yet there is a vast impersonality in the book that frequently seems at paradox with lyricism. Who is anyone? Where is he? *Brownstone Eclogues* seems an epitaph over the grave of an anonymous world. And I think the author meant it to be. In any event, he leaves the impression of being a walker of streets, under lamps, in dank, unrespectable houses—just looking. Names do not matter, only man, and that impersonally—and sadly. Even when he writes pure lyric, as in his poem "Who Shapes A Balustrade," over the stone-carving falls an indefinable sorrow, as if nothing associated with man may know joy. In a good many of his pieces, one is left with the obscene taste of underdone squash in his mouth. Yet this book, for its vivid imagery of place, its music and consistency of mood, or suggested reality, its sharp, fresh idiom which inversely produces anonymity, its chained anguish, is one of the best I have read in many months.

It is the kind of poetry I like. Conrad Aiken sees the implications of man's being and has indicated them in fine, strong poetry tangentially, as he himself says; he does not flinch from life and its living, and what he has written is not for the squeamish or the thoughtless.

GEORGE SCARBROUGH

CORRESPONDENCE

Auburn, Alabama,
May 31, 1943.

To the Editor of *The Sewanee Review*:

In Professor Harry M. Campbell's article, "Experiment and Achievement" (*The Sewanee Review*, Spring, 1943), there are two apparent misinterpretations of my critical position with reference to William Faulkner which I should like to correct.

The first paragraph of Professor Campbell's article leaves the impression that I think Mr. Faulkner is a writer of equal importance with Dante—an obviously ridiculous idea and one that I have certainly never held. As a matter of fact, my allusion to Dante in connection with Mr. Faulkner was made in an effort to indicate the nature of the symbolic meanings that I find in Mr. Faulkner's work. But Professor Campbell omits the specific protection that I gave myself in my essay, "Faulkner's Mythology". (*The Kenyon Review*, Summer, 1939). The paragraph to which Professor Campbell alludes reads in part as follows:

... Moreover, in each book there is a dramatically credible fiction which remains particular and (sometimes with difficulty) coherent as action, even though the pattern is true, in a larger sense, as myth. In short, Mr. Faulkner's successful work has the same kind, though certainly not the same degree, of general meaning that is to be found in Dante's *Divina Commedia* or the *Electra* of Sophocles. . . . (p. 292)

Further along, Professor Campbell states that for me the Sartoris tradition is represented in *The Sound and the Fury* by the Compson family and complains that my reading will not work because the Compsons do not behave like Sartorises. But my

446

actual reading of *The Sound and the Fury* is that although one might expect the Compsons to represent the Sartoris tradition, they do not actually represent it at all:

In *The Sound and the Fury* Quentin Compson represents all that is left of the Sartoris tradition. The rest of his family have either succumbed entirely to the Snopes world . . . or else have drugs to isolate them from it. . . . It is evident that Quentin's traditionalism is far gone in the direction of formalization, with its concomitant lack of vitality. . . . (pp. 288-289)

Later I refer to "the Snopes world, with which the Compson house has become thoroughly infected and to which it is subject. . ." (p. 289) In general, I am afraid that Professor Campbell misunderstands my use of the term "Sartoris"; he seems to think I mean a class, whereas I actually mean a spiritual condition.

I do not mean to attack Professor Campbell's article, which is a valid contribution to the study of a subject that interests me very much; but I should like to clarify my position for the benefit of those who may have read Professor Campbell's article but not mine.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE MARION O'DONNELL.

448

by John Wild

THE INVERSION OF CULTURE, AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION

WE are apt to use the term *barbarism* in referring both to primitive peoples who have an undeveloped culture and little scientific knowledge, and to "civilized" states possessing science and technique, but in a disordered form. This leads us to slur over the importance of the latter phenomenon, and to be less critical of ourselves; for we tend to take the easy view that if the arts and sciences are cultivated in a given community, we have no right to call it uncultured or barbarian. The Greeks, who first used the term *barbarian*, applied it unhesitatingly to the Persians and to other "civilized" peoples who were certainly very far from being savage tribes. Such civilized barbarism is clearly possible, for in addition to the separate arts taken one by one (civilization), there is the order in which they are cultivated (culture). A nation like modern Germany, for example, may possess all the arts and crafts developed to a high degree of efficiency, and yet be a highly inverted or barbarian state.

Such disorder does not necessarily express itself in chaos; in fact, when most acute, it expresses itself in a rigid kind of order very difficult to distinguish in its incipient stages from the incipient stages of culture. It must be remembered that related things can be mutually subordinated in two ways: the higher subordinates the lower, or the lower subordinates the higher. The miser's actions are not chaotic or disorderly in any apparent sense; he would be better off if they were. He has subordinated the end to the means in a perfectly orderly way, but in the wrong way. This sort of anatropism, or inversion, is far more possible in a great human culture, where the different arts and

techniques are not held together within the nature of a single being, and have a certain natural autonomy of their own. In such a community it is possible for all the arts to be cultivated, as well as to be ordered with respect to one another, but in an order which is partially, even completely, upside down.

Let us see if we can grasp the theoretical limit of barbarism which these inversions of culture approach. If so, we shall have a standard by which to grade differing degrees of barbarism and barbaric tendencies, and thus a means of avoiding bias in judging the claims of our enemies.

Art is the rational guidance of power. Art becomes anatropic or barbarized to the extent that this guidance is undermined, even though subordinate technique and apparent power remain. A single art or function becomes inverted when, instead of forming and controlling its natural subject-matter, it merely pretends to exercise this function, but really allows subject matter to go its own way. Such a false or inverted technician in medicine we call a quack. With a great display of technical virtuosity, especially in vocabulary, the quack pretends to direct and to treat the patient decisively. In reality, he fawns over his charge, feeling for what the patient thinks is wrong, rather than giving an objective diagnosis. Finally, for a fee, he administers something temporarily soothing.

In the lower arts, which deal with visible, material things or situations, such deception is relatively rare. It is difficult for a shoemaker to sell us shoes that are not shoes at all, or for a navigator merely to pretend to get us across the sea. Here the lack of any material result is easily detected. But inversion may easily occur *between* the different arts. Thus, instead of really ordering and regulating the agencies and interests of the community, the politician may merely evade difficult decisions, yield to strong interests, and let things take their course. Instead of eliminating wasteful and unnecessary demands, and regulating distribution in such a way that legitimate and necessary demands are satisfied, the hygienic arts may treat all demands as though

they were equally legitimate, and, without attempting actual control, passively accept any chance mode of distribution.

As disorder increases, the arts become disconnected from their natural bases, but continue to be elaborated with no clear reference to the natural needs they fulfill; as though they lived a life of their own in competition with the life they now serve only haphazardly. A remedy for overproduction is sought in the scramble for more markets in undeveloped countries, rather than in the imposition of order and discipline. A remedy for under-production is sought in a feverish expansion of productive apparatus, and in a restless search for the raw materials of unexploited countries to feed them. The result of both is the gradual surge of imperialism, from which, as Plato long ago pointed out, arise war and the chief evils of mankind. This inversion among the material arts and government is the first degree of cultural barbarism. As Plato also points out in his *Gorgias*, such an inversion occurred in the progressive era of Fifth Century Athens, so similar to our own nineteenth century. Both periods ended in a great "World War."

Such a general inversion of the arts could not occur, of course, if the higher, rational phases of culture were adequately maintained. It is here that cultural disease takes its inception, since it is here that culture as a whole is first conceived and directed. The higher arts are peculiarly adapted to quackery. The ancients had a name for it, sophistry; they clearly recognized its drastic threat to the whole cultural enterprise. We have no accepted name for it now. The word *sophistry* no longer means what it meant to Plato, but has been trivialized to mean "captious quibbling," which is no serious threat to anyone or anything. This has blinded us to the terrible peril of quackery in the highest arts. It flourishes most readily in these all-important arts because of the intellectual, hence invisible character of their essential work. To all external appearances the quack teacher, who instructs pupils in "original" ideas of his own, seems to be just as good as the genuine teacher, who has spent long years in ferreting out a few grains of truth. In reality, between seeming to

know and really knowing there is a sinister chasm, fraught with the most serious consequences.

Some are interested in religion, for example, and some take no stock in it at all. How many of either group ever seriously entertain the possibility that what they think of as religion may be only a most convincing imitation? Men have suddenly awakened to the discovery that everything they thought good was really bad, and what they thought bad was really good. For an individual there can be no more horrible experience than this. There can be no more horrible experience for a great culture. The only way of guarding against it is to cherish the higher rational arts, and the individual intellect, which it is their duty to nurture and sustain. The mob is notoriously unable to distinguish the real from the apparent, the true from the false. Yet the ultimate fate of every culture depends upon the maintenance of this distinction, especially in those broad philosophical issues where it is most difficult to maintain.

When the higher arts are inverted by what the ancients called sophistry, culture cannot be maintained. True religion is confused with appealing constructions. True art and true education are confused with quackeries, which pander to the ingrained habits and instincts of those whom it is their duty to instruct. Not only is each art individually inverted, but the whole order of the higher arts is turned topsy-turvy. Religion, instead of providing needed guidance to philosophy, mixes itself with the subordinate discipline, achieving a bastard product which is neither religion nor philosophy—now widely known as “philosophy of religion” or “religious philosophy.” Philosophy in turn becomes unable to order or interpret the sciences, passively accepts their results, piecing them together in a mere encyclopaedia, or yields to the dictates of some fashionable science which thinks its special methodology is capable of unlocking all the secrets of being. Left without firm guidance from philosophy and science, the educational arts fall into a chaos of separate disciplines, and finally, without any broad and stable pattern of knowledge, gradually

fall under the dominion of politics, or of some group which has usurped political power.

As in the case of the socio-technical arts, this disorder is attended by an artificial separation of the higher arts from the rational functions which they normally nurture and preserve. They come to be looked upon as lovely, cultural constructions rather than as human necessities, and become the special concern of certain groups rather than of the people as a whole. Religion is regarded as providing a peculiar kind of comfort to those of a certain temperament. Philosophy falls prey to antiquarians and other supertechnicians, no longer interested in truth. Finally, education is regarded as an ornament, essential not to life itself, but rather to social success. Reason and will, thus left without clear and decisive guidance, achieve truth and integrity only by coincidence. The intellect presented with no coherent body of universal truth capable of inspiring certainty, falls into scepticism and relativism. The undisciplined will, provided with no clear conception of its natural end, yields to shifting impulse. This inversion of the higher arts is the second, and more serious degree of cultural anatropism. It is a familiar phenomenon in history.

At the end of the disastrous nineteenth century most of the great nations of the world, including our own, had achieved both the first and the second degrees of cultural anatropism. The arts and sciences were severally intact—even the higher intellectual arts, the great heritage of the western past; but they were pursued in an anatropic mode. In countries like our own, where political tradition had received a strong impress from western religion and philosophy, individual rights were still respected, but with little understanding of the imperative duties and functions on which they were based, and with the vague assumption that all that they meant was doing as you pleased. Such governments were saved from complete capitulation to subpolitical interests, though all were on the verge of internal anarchy and revolution. At such a time, politics is of supreme importance, for it remains the center of fluid power in the state, and the only possible source

of order. Everything depends on how this power is utilized. Chaos cannot long endure. What sort of order is politics to establish? Two opposite courses are open.

One is the long hard way of using this power in the state according to the best traditions of western culture, subjecting the undisciplined agencies of production and distribution to order and plan, in the service of the people as a whole, but also preserving individual rights, and doing all that can be externally done to bring about the actual exercise of these rights. This is the program now adopted by the United Nations. If actually carried out, it may lead to a genuine restoration of the integral order of western culture.

The other course is the fast, easy way, of using the natural powers of government irrevocably to complete the inverted order of culture, accelerating the expansive dynamism of the material arts, abolishing individual rights, together with the rational arts, and in their place enforcing by despotic decree substitutes for reason. This third and final degree of barbarism, the "new order," is not, of course, without historic analogies. It is as old as human tyranny. But with the vast array of modern material technique at its command the permanent threat to reason has been immensely magnified.

II

In spite of its lack of inclusive detail, the preceding analysis of the structure of human culture, so far as it does not distort the major phases of this structure, will provide us with a stable basis for understanding the essential nature of the great world movement now represented by the axis powers. The issue of the present war is not merely who shall rule the world, but how the world shall be ruled. It is a conflict not merely between opposed armies, navies, and air forces, but between opposed cultural orders. There is no single element in our own culture which is wholly absent from Nazi culture. The difference lies in the order in which these elements are arranged and subordinated one to another. This is the most that any "revolution"

which does not simply destroy man can achieve. If he is to exist at all, these basic elements must also exist and be organized in some cultural order. Hence we only confuse ourselves if we think of our enemies simply as destroyers of order. The most that any man, or any horde of men, can do is to destroy one order by substituting another.

But we are not wholly mistaken in regarding the new order as a kind of ordered disorder made all the more dangerous by the "order" which gives it strength enough to maintain its inherent anarchy, and even to impose it upon others. How this is possible has been made clear by our study of the process of cultural inversion, which in its initial stages is marked by obvious confusion, but in its later and more acute stages by a rigidity and regimentation which may be mistaken for order. The *intermediate* state of obvious anarchy and confusion is easily distinguished. But genuine order and genuine disorder, the two extremes, look alike to the unvary.

Bearing these facts in mind, let us turn to the new world order in Germany, where cultural inversion has now passed through the painful, incipient stages of anarchy and strife, and has become something taken for granted and established, thus resembling the state of health. Let us approach this cultural order like doctors who know something of the true and complex order of health, and who are thus prepared to find surprising distortions and inversions back of surface symptoms. Remembering that human culture expresses itself in three major phases, individual life and the individual therapeutic arts, social life and its therapeutic arts, and the general relation between these two, let us make a cultural diagnosis of the Nazi state.

III

Individual life cannot be lived without the exercise of the faculties of reason, will, and imagination, which must be nurtured before they can be exercised at all. They must be guarded and protected even after they are once exercised, or they are apt to

lapse into distortion and falsity: The best index to the manner in which individual life is being lived is the manner in which the higher therapeutic arts are being exercised and maintained. Fortunately it is possible to judge of the condition of these arts with some degree of accuracy through the written records which they leave.

The highest of the therapeutic arts is religion. Like philosophy, this mode of therapy overarches intellect and the whole realm of theory, as well as will and the whole realm of practice. So far as they employ their natural noetic faculties with careful discipline, all men are able to learn something of that real order of things which exists in complete independence of subjective opinions and prejudices, and something of that good which remains strictly good in complete independence of subjective desires and interests. Such knowledge is very hard to achieve and even harder to maintain. Without the additional light shed upon this objective order of being by religion, and the purer aspiration which religion cultivates, experience shows that knowledge is apt to fall into relativism and confusion; and aspiration, even for lesser and more purely human goods, is apt to weaken. When the supreme insights of religion are guarded and cherished, human culture will not die, even though the other higher arts and sciences fall into barbaric misuse. Thus, at the collapse of Greco-Roman civilization, science, learning, the schools, the law and the art of government—almost all the higher arts and techniques perished before the sword of the barbarian. Religion alone maintained a precarious existence through the dark ages from the fifth to the ninth and tenth centuries. This was enough. Culture cannot be killed until religion is killed. Western culture did not die, but was recovered and redeveloped under religious tutelage in the later middle ages and handed down to modern times.

Of all the modern races and nations which have come under this civilizing influence the Germans, especially the northern Germans, have been the most recalcitrant and stubborn in their barbaric subjectivism. From the beginnings of modern history they

have been in constant rebellion against the religious universalism of Christianity (favoring some interpretation more in accordance with their peculiar tribal cults), and against the rational universalism of western culture (favoring a racial *Kultur* which would be a subjective creation of their own). At the beginning of the German Reformation, Luther attacked Aristotle and the whole of natural philosophy as an impediment to religion. Instead he set up the individual conscience—precisely that which needs guidance from a more universal source if tribal or sectarian subjectivism is to be avoided as a supreme authority. The result has been an inversion or humanization of religion, or “the German moral consciousness,” which, instead of actually elevating man toward God, attempts to depress God toward man. The German philosopher Kant asserted that “even the holy one of the Gospel must first be compared with our ideal of moral perfection before one can recognize him. . . .”

German idealistic philosophy of the nineteenth century was a vast attempt to destroy the ancient idea of a real order of being, having its source in something independent of human opinions and desires, and to substitute for it the idea of a subjective order immanent in human experience; or, more briefly, to put man as he is in the place of God. The chaos and confusion resulting from this abandonment of universal reason has been hymned by German philosophers as the great modern discovery, and identified with liberty, which, they maintain, is incompatible with the recognition of anything superior to what is in “the self.” The ancients called this not liberty, but sophistry and human pride (*hubris*). This great subjectivist movement in philosophy spread into other lands; the final consequences of its attempt to domesticate God and to assimilate him with the German spirit are only now beginning to become clear in the barbaric phenomenon of “German Christianity,” and in the open attempts to revive the germanic tribal cults.

The idealistic philosophy of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel found many adherents in other lands who regarded it as one of the great achievements of our cultural history. Others ignored

it as a harmless mass of academic speculation. Very few saw in it the first seeds of a revolution which may yet succeed in overturning the whole of western culture. At least one man, the poet Heine, saw this as long ago as the middle of the nineteenth century. During his exile in Paris, he wrote the following clairvoyant prophecy:

German philosophy is an important affair which concerns all humanity, and only our great grandchildren will be in a condition to decide whether we deserve blame or praise for having first worked out our philosophy and our revolution thereafter. It seems to me that a methodical people, such as we, had to begin with a Reformation, advance to philosophy later, and to come to the political revolution only after having passed through these phases. I find this order wholly reasonable. The heads which philosophy has employed in meditation may be cut off at pleasure by the revolution, but philosophy could never have employed the heads which the revolution would have cut off beforehand. Nevertheless, my dear compatriots, have no fear—the German Revolution will be neither debonair nor the milder, for the Critique of Kant, the transcendental idealism of Fichte, and the Philosophy of Nature will have come before it. These doctrines have developed revolutionary forces which await only the right moment to explode and fill the world with awe and admiration. Then will come forth the Kantians who will no more want to hear of piety in the world of facts than in the world of ideas, and with axe and sword they will upheave without mercy the soil of our European life, to extirpate from it the last roots of the past. Then will come upon the scene the armored Fichtleans, whose fanaticism of will shall be mastered neither by fear nor by gain; for they believe in the spirit, and despise matter, like the first Christians who could be weakened neither by bodily torture nor by worldly pleasures. Indeed, these transcendental idealists, in a social upheaval, could be even more inflexible than the first Christians, for the latter endured martyrdom for the sake of eternal happiness, whereas the transcendental idealists look upon martyrdom as a mere appearance, and remain inaccessible within the fortress of thought. But the most terrifying of all shall be the Philosophers of Nature who will intervene by action in a German Revolution, and identify themselves with the work of destruction, for if the hand of the Kantian strikes hard and without relent because his heart can be moved by no respect for tradi-

tion; if the Fichtean boldly scorns all dangers because to him they do not in reality exist; the philosopher of nature will be terrible in that he holds communion with the original powers of the earth. He conjures the hidden forces of tradition. He can evoke that of all German pantheism, and he can arouse in himself that ardour in combat which we find in the ancient Germans, and he desires to fight, not for the sake of destruction, nor for the sake of conquest, but for the sake of fighting. Christianity has mellowed this brutal, warring ardour to a certain extent; but it has been unable to unroot it, and when the Cross, that talisman who enchains it, shall be broken, then will break loose again that ferocity of the ancient warriors, the frantic exaltation of the Berserkers of whom the poets of the North sing even to this day. Then, and alas, this day will come. The old warlike divinities will rise from their fabulous tombs, and wipe the dust from their eyes. Thor will raise himself with his gigantic hammer and demolish the Gothic Cathedrals. . . . When you shall hear the noise and the tumult be on your guard, dear neighbors of France, and keep out of what we shall do in Germany, for evil might come to you. . . . Do not laugh at this advice, ever though it comes from a dreamer who invites you to distrust the Kantians, the Fichteans, and the Philosophers of Nature. Do not laugh at the fantastic poet who expects in the world of facts that same revolution which has taken place in the realm of spirit. Thought precedes action as lightning precedes thunder. The thunder in Germany will indeed be German too.

Contemporary apologists for the new religious cults of Hitler Germany merely follow up the subjectivist implications of idealistic philosophy with great consistency and relevance to their own circumstances. The Christian conception of grace is irreconcilable with the German *Geist*. Hence "the German spirit will tolerate no God of mercy, but a God who corresponds with its own moral experience." The German soul cannot tolerate the thought of a God who transcends time and history and rests in his eternity. While the suggestive word *eternity* is still used after the manner of Hegel, it is interpreted "not as a resting but as a moving eternity." This makes it possible not only to identify God pantheistically with the world process, but especially, after the manner of Kant, with the moral consciousness of the individual, and with the expansion of Germany over the world. "Just as God

reveals Himself in the individual Person, so also in the history of a whole People."

The result of this progressive humanization of religion has been a tendency among the more intelligent to seek religious enlightenment and edification from the subordinate discipline of philosophy. This is the reason for that peculiar fanaticism with which, for several generations, Germans have thrown themselves into the academic pursuit of philosophy, and have swarmed into college lecture halls to have their faith restored by the latest creation of the German philosophic spirit. But the imposition of this impossible burden on a subordinate art has only in turn debased and demoralized this art. The great speculative systems and encyclopaedias poured forth by the idealistic movement did not permanently restore religious faith. They only distorted and inverted it, while at the same time they brought philosophy itself into confusion and discredit by their speculative excesses, and by the pompous claims of absolute finality made by each successive thinker for the last original system. The rational insight of the people as a whole was certainly undermined by this protracted honeymoon with the absolute, and an inability to distinguish between things as they really are and things as they seem to be was disseminated throughout the community.

Idealism had been discredited by competent academic criticism in the colleges and universities before the last war. But three centuries of subjectivism, separating them from the great traditions of classical philosophy, made it impossible for the critics to discover anything to take its place. Hence the cleft between the natural philosophy of the people (seeking positive therapy for their vague and fluctuating insights) and the technical philosophy of the schools (deprived of all therapeutic power by scepticism and relativism) rapidly grew into a chasm. As the people found hope and relief in fantastic myths, easily dressed up to look like an idealistic system of philosophy, the professional philosophers became more and more detached from the burning issues of actual life in academic displays of technical virtuosity and in historical antiquarianism, easily dressed up to look like the pur-

suit of philosophy. The scorn of the man of theory for the man of practice was equalled only by the scorn of the practical politician for all theory.

Before 1932 scholars and professors in the universities were almost wholly detached from the actual world, and sneered at the Nazi movement as an indication of mass primitivism. When the storm actually burst in 1933, the universities were caught wholly unprepared, and capitulated at once in terror with no *organized* opposition. Younger men who needed jobs were forced to join the party, and to teach the mythologies of blood and soil. Older men, each with an original hobby of his own, were left to cancel each other out by spreading a general scepticism and relativism, the ideal soil for mythologies. Such is the pathetic story of the surrender of the German universities in 1933. Individuals here and there showed great courage, and were exiled or sent to concentration camps. But there was no organized philosophical opposition, no single philosophical Niemoeller. How could there be? Such opposition could come only from a living tradition, embodying a core of basic insights, carefully recaptured and guarded by succeeding generations, gradually refined, elaborated, and applied to the special problem of succeeding periods. Such a tradition had not existed for three hundred years.

Without the guidance of sweeping theoretical insights, engrained in such a tradition, the therapeutic agencies of education had long fallen into confusion, and were ripe for tyrannical domination from beneath. The propaganda value of the educational system was clearly recognized by the Nazis; when they swept into power in 1933 they immediately took steps to gain as complete control as possible over the schools and universities. In the elementary schools, where a preparatory technique of direct admonition and habit training must be utilized, this transition was smooth and almost imperceptible. The admonitions, images, and stories presented to the child, and the habits formed in him were easily given a nationalistic and warlike, rather than a universal and peaceful direction. By a skillful use of tone and ex-

ample it was easy to produce the desired effect in such subjects as history, and, with more difficulty, even in arithmetic.

In the Gymnasium, still governed by traces of the classical tradition on which western civilization has been based, some opposition was met. The Nazis recognized the danger of the universal loyalties encouraged by such a tradition, and in 1936-7 they aimed a death-blow at the classical Gymnasium. The number of these schools was suddenly reduced to half, and the influence of the modern Realschule, more like an ordinary American high-school, correspondingly increased. Western culture could not be destroyed unless the last vestiges of the classical-Christian tradition were first destroyed. Respect for dead languages and for the writings of foreign peoples in lands of a dead antiquity is in itself a disrespect for the living forces of the people. So the more "useful" study of modern languages was substituted for the classical disciplines which train the traditional faculties instead of filling the mind with information. Colorless, scientific detail was substituted for the super-national ideals which permeate the ancient literatures. These ideals were now "dead." Education must free itself from subservience to a dead past, and devote itself to train men for practical life in the service of the Nazi state.

Technical schools offered no particular problem. They attempted no direct intellectual therapy, but simply trained engineers to carry out efficiently and obediently any tasks which might be assigned to them. Obedient servants of this type were essential. Students, therefore, were encouraged to develop the technical habit of mind, to sneer at pure knowledge as useless and theoretical, and to abandon to their leaders all critical reflection about ultimate purposes and values. As a result of this policy, students swarmed into technical schools, which, with greatly expanded facilities, went on doing exactly what they had been doing before.

The universities and academies of higher learning, however, where knowledge was still pursued for its own sake, and something more than technical proficiency in a subordinate discipline

was attempted and sometimes even achieved, offered certain difficulties. Such institutions were by their very nature "liberal" or "free;" so far as they justified their existence, they taught men not merely a set of useful habits or a mass of information, but to think for themselves. There is a place in the Nazi economy for every sort of man, except a man who is able and willing to think for himself. From the very beginning the Nazi leaders correctly saw in liberal education the greatest threat to their whole enterprise, and took steps immediately after the revolution (as early as 1934-5) to eliminate the threat.

The first phase of Nazi policy was an expression of open hostility and violence. The technical "schoiar," or *Fachmann*, who never ventured outside certain circumscribed limits, and who maintained a strictly "objective" or detached attitude towards all broader questions, could be easily adjusted to the Party. But those who had gained sufficient insight for the establishment of a more embracing position and a passionate love of knowledge for its own sake, were at once under suspicion. Wholesale dismissals were enforced. The University of Heidelberg, noted for its "liberal" faculty, soon lost 24% of its staff, replaced for the most part by party stooges or safe men of inferior quality.

The cultural effect of such a weeding out can hardly be exaggerated, for the whole cultural enterprise is guided by theoretical insight. The vast technical activities of agriculture, medicine, and engineering, for example, must be guided by the theoretical insights of the pure sciences of chemistry, botany, anatomy, and physics. The vast agencies of politics, education, and the pure sciences themselves must be guided by the theoretical insights of philosophy, if they are to be maintained and extended. Such insights can be attained only by the individual intellect at the cost of an elaborate discipline, requiring patience and sacrifice.¹ It is no wonder, therefore, that the savage attack of the

¹Liberal academies, devoted to the pursuit of pure knowledge, have existed in the West since Plato's first academy, except for the truly dark ages of barbarism between the sixth and the tenth centuries A.D.

Nazi government on the German Universities in 1934-5 called forth so great an opposition in business and the army that a less sensational but no less effective policy had to be adopted. This significant shift of policy and its destiny in modern Germany is something which all Americans would do well to take to heart.

The Nazis are no fools. They will not pursue unpopular measures if the same results can be achieved in less unpopular ways. After a careful review of the situation, they decided in 1935, when they had removed not more than 15% of the teaching staff of the universities, that further violence was unnecessary. Of course they had control of all new appointments and promotions. It was soon clearly understood that a young man who was not a party member could hardly hope for a successful academic career in the new Germany; in young men the love of knowledge, being of tender growth, can hardly hope to outweigh the need for a career. Young scholars thronged into the party. But what of the remaining 85% of the teaching staff? This is what should give us pause, for we must remember that the pre-revolutionary universities of Germany were in no essential respect different from the American universities today, most of which are, as a matter of fact, definitely modelled on a German pattern. After a candid survey of the situation, the Nazis decided that the universities were so culturally decadent as to be incapable of inspiring any real opposition to a carefully planned regime of barbarism. They could be safely left to fester from the internal diseases which had already sapped them of vitality.

On the one hand were those who were quite content to plod along in some harmless technical rut or scholarly routine, still benumbed by the great nineteenth century superstition of inevitable progress into thinking that all the major problems would somehow settle themselves. On the other hand were the "creative" thinkers, each with some pet system or theory of his own, completely contradicting all the rest. Lip service was still paid to the great tradition of classical, Christian learning, which had kept the ideal of liberal education alive for more than two thousand years, and which was still capable of maintaining in an

intelligible order the knowledge accumulated through the ages. But this tradition had been so weakened in the minds of modern men by centuries of idealism, scepticism, relativism, and the leprosy of antiquarian research that it was hardly more than a name.

So the Nazis concluded that the threat of the modern university had been greatly exaggerated.

Of course the expense of maintaining a generation of cultural parasites must be borne. This was a cheap price to pay for soothing the community with the comforting thought that its higher education was still alive. The next generation, brought up in the Nazi schools, would need no soothing; they would never even have heard of higher education. History has shown that the Nazis were right. What of our own universities, so carefully modelled on the German pattern, so full of learning and antiquarian research, so free from all cultural commitment? Have they become so free as to have lost all traces of genuine freedom? Are they so rotten that the dismissal of 15% of the teaching staff would make them ripe for perfect barbarism?

When philosophy and theology have been allowed to separate and to fall into hopeless confusion, they are, of course, unable to maintain any pattern of understanding which is sound enough and broad enough in scope to provide guidance for the complex agencies and activities of education. But these activities do not simply go on themselves. They must be oriented to some guiding aim, and fitted together according to some plan. As such guiding insight grows dim, more and more emphasis will be placed upon teaching and research routines which merely conserve the *status quo*. Then, as the situation alters, and the need for readjustment arises, there will be no stable body of doctrine with reference to which such a readjustment can be made. "Original" plans and systems must be devised and constructed, alike only in that they are all contradictory. As the conflict between routine scholarship and original thought becomes more vicious, confusion is intensified, until finally the whole educational system, paralyzed in its higher branches and threatened with com-

plete chaos, must accept guidance from beneath, and give itself over to politics, the least rational of all the philosophic arts.

This is complete inversion. Instead of wisdom's coming to control politics through education, politics through propaganda bureaus and centers of indoctrination dressed up to look like schools, comes to dictate a crude imitation of philosophy and religion, now servile to the supposed interests of the state. As we know, this has happened to Germany. Religion and philosophy, which of all the higher arts and enterprises include a minimum of force and a maximum of contemplation, have given themselves into bondage to politics and statecraft, which include a minimum of sheer contemplation and a maximum of force. Reason and contemplation have nothing whatsoever to do with force except to guide it. The one thing force as such cannot compel is reason and worship; hence the supposed control of education by politics is itself a sham. Politics can only destroy education and substitute irrational propaganda in its place. Still less can politics ever control philosophy or religion. And these cultural anatropisms, clearly visible in Germany, debase politics itself.

by Don M. Wolfe

THE ROLE OF MILTON'S CHRIST

NEITHER as philosopher nor as poet was Milton content with a hazy, far-away heaven as the goal of Christian strivings. He wanted a heaven on earth, a substantial, breathing commonwealth of perfect manners and absolute justice. It was an earthly commonwealth that Adam and Eve forfeited in the Garden; it is an earthly heaven visualized in Michael's prophecy at the end of *Paradise Lost*. Thus, too, when Milton speaks of regarding paradise, he anticipates a perfected mankind inhabiting the unchanging earth. Having dedicated twenty years of his life to the creation, as he hoped, of an English commonwealth pleasing to his Maker, Milton still could not relinquish his dream of heaven on earth. When frustrated by the actuality of social conflict, this dream took refuge in the poetry of his later years. His spirit now racked, and his hopes diluted, by the harsh perverseness of human nature, Milton no longer visualized a utopia in his time or the second coming of Christ to smite its enemies. But somewhere in the womb of the future the bright commonwealth lay gleaming, that commonwealth that in England had trembled on the verge of realization, then toppled miserably into chaos.

The instrument by which Milton expected an earthly paradise to be regained was the personality of Jesus. As we examine Milton's conception of this personality, however, we discover in his analysis and methods of world redemption a Christ curiously divided. First appears the temperate, self-disciplined Christ, master of hunger and passion, resister of glory and riches, a man who, in Plato's words, "has put in order his own inner house, and is at peace with himself." Then there is Christ the judge and punisher, who will subdue by force, if necessary, the

stubborn of the earth and protect the righteous against their enemies. Finally Milton has characterized in *Paradise Regained* the mild, persuasive Christ, capable of infinite patience, believer in the gradual, peaceful redemption of men and society. Each of these three aspects of Christ's personality represents a different means of regaining paradise; each infers a distinct and separate philosophy of reform; and each we may find reflected in Milton's own personality and intellectual outlook. Undoubtedly Milton believed that the example of temperance, righteous force, and peaceful persuasion might be harmonized as means to a glorious end, each in its place efficacious. He himself had justified all three methods in the Puritan attempt at reformation in England. Yet there are certain philosophical contradictions in these methods that correspond to conflicts in Milton's own thought and explain why his portrait of Jesus in *Paradise Regained* strikes the critic as essentially inharmonious.

In the first temptation of *Paradise Regained* Milton introduces the temperate Christ, who, in refusing delicacies incomparably appealing after many days of hunger, demonstrates mastery of reason over appetites, though these are intensified by sweetest music:

Harmonious Airs . . .
Of chiming strings, or charming pipes and winds
Of gentlest gale *Arabian* odors fann'd
From their soft wings, and *Flora's* earliest smells.

Shortly after, recalling Christ's humble origin, Satan reminds him of the poverty of philosophers and tempts him with riches with which he may elevate himself in the social scale. But the temperate Christ is no more responsive to a life of luxury than to the immediate pangs of hunger. He explains to Satan his principle of self-mastery, a principle so often reiterated by Milton:

Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, Desires, and Fears, is more a King;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains:

And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or head-strong Multitudes,
Subject himself to Anarchy within,
And lawless passions in him which he serves.

This *principle* of temperance, a central *pattern* in the personality of Jesus, should be, Milton infers, a primary *aim* of the wayfaring Christian. Each man is responsible for the ordering of his own inner life, which, Milton always insists, is not rejection, but control and guidance of appetites and passions. In the organization of his personality each man can choose either chaos or harmony. Nowhere does Milton allow a vital qualification of this doctrine, which would deny that any circumstance, however inimical to rational control, can excuse man's failure to attain the virtue of temperance. The regaining of paradise, according to this conception of the conquest, then, is by battle waged on as many fronts as there are people in the world, with each one capable of, and responsible for, resolving his inner conflicts.

This view of temperance as the supreme virtue in Christ and man assumes, of course, that Christ was not infinitely patient with the sinful soul. As he rejects and judges Satan in the poem, so he will some day reject and judge those men who have not achieved self-mastery. Against those who have not attained temperance he will, however reluctantly, use physical power, becoming punisher as well as judge. Milton's Christ prefers persuasion to force; but it is evident that he thinks that those incapable of governing themselves must be restrained with a stern solicitude for their own spiritual good. Milton does not expand his image of Christ the punisher; he simply permits Christ to say he will "make persuasion do the work of fear . . . the stubborn only to subdue."

Christ the punisher we may trace, however, in Milton's many references in *Paradise Regained* to Christ as a military leader. It is true that Christ rejects warfare as a means to his glorious aim of a paradise on earth; but even in his rejection he does not without qualification condemn war in every circumstance. He condemns war for that glory which had animated Caesar and

Alexander. He seeks not the praise of the common man given so freely to conquerors; the common man is vulgar and indiscriminate. Moreover, war destroys the soul of the conqueror. After this rebuff Satan appeals to a much more valid reason for Christ's military action: the freeing of his people from the yoke of oppression, himself to be erected finally as the just ruler of his nation. This is a much more difficult choice for Christ, as it would have been for Milton. As a boy Christ had pictured himself as overthrowing "Brute violence and proud Tyrannick power," not in Judea only, but over the whole earth. He had concluded, however, that it was more heavenly first to attempt persuasion, to "make persuasion do the work of fear," though by no means certain that this peaceful means would banish forever righteous use of force and repression.

It is evident that Milton in *Paradise Regained* rejects reluctantly the concept of Christ as a warrior deliverer. In all Milton's years of pamphleteering he had not once questioned warfare as a means to a righteous commonwealth. He had written of Jesus in *Of Reformation* as coming soon to "put an end to all earthly tyrannies." In *The Tenure* he had pictured Christ rejecting the rule of tyrants, favoring the cause of the Independents. Time after time Milton had claimed for Cromwell's arms the validity of a Christian enterprise: to set men free by armed might, destroying the enemies of freedom and the Lord. In *Paradise Lost* he had made Jesus the personification of ineffable love, it is true, but also the incarnation of God's military might. Jesus it was who had mounted his chariot in the midst of heavy danger, his countenance filled with wrath and terror, "gloomie as night," and driven the rebel angels

With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And Chrystall wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide,
Rowl'd inward, and a spacious Gap disclos'd
Into the wastful Deep; the monstrous sight
Strook them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind; headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrauth
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

This picture of the military Christ, the Christ judging and punishing, the Christ riding with the armies of the just against tyrants and sinful rebels, was in harmony with Milton's fundamental hope for the salvation of society. He wanted an England of justice in his time, with Christ on the side of the soldiers of the Commonwealth. In *Paradise Regained* this military Christ hovers in the background of Milton's thought, having yielded only partially to the persuasive reformer and his ideal of a distant utopia.

Jesus objects to warfare against oppression not only because it destroys the conqueror. Another reason, certainly more vital to Milton if not to his Christ, is that the people are not worthy of their freedom. They are still slaves to their passions, unworthy, abject followers of Belial and Mammon, a "miscellaneous rabble" that does not deserve liberty. Jesus denies that he should free even the lost tribes of Israel: in their captivity they have not penitently besought the God of their fathers; rather they have followed heathen gods, "unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd." If the people were masters of themselves, Milton infers, then Jesus might justifiably raise the sword to free them from the yoke. In *Paradise Regained* this perverse sinfulness of the masses assumes a compulsion far more convincing than ethical objections in Christ's rejection of military conquest. This is not hard to comprehend when one examines Milton the Christian reformer. He had no patience with far-off utopias gained by the slow ascendancy of knowledge and Christian mildness. He has not questioned, as have some of his contemporaries, that war for freedom might be a Christian enterprise. The militant Christ executing God's wrath was nearer to Milton's heart than the peaceful Jesus, whose gaze was fixed on far centuries and the slow acceptance of human brotherhood. Now that the Good Old Cause had failed, Milton placed his hope in the gradual persuasiveness of this compassionate Christ. Milton's heart, it is true, was too militant to believe wholeheartedly in such a power. He was disillusioned, frustrated, bitterly courageous, a prisoner among the Philistines. Gladly would he

have grasped the sword again to strike down the worshippers of Dagon and raise the standard of a free commonwealth. But the persuasive Jesus was at least a powerful hope.

Besides Christ the exponent of temperance, and Christ the judge and punisher, there is in *Paradise Regained* the Christ of infinite love. This concept had recurred persistently in Milton's thought, from his earliest poetry to his last. In his youth he had rejoiced in the "exceeding love" of a Christ willing to sacrifice himself for mankind on the altar of justice. This Christ appears again in some of Milton's most eloquent passages on marriage and toleration. The Christ of *Paradise Regained* is a projection of these earlier images. He would seek a new paradise on earth by "deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent, by Patience, temperance." War, insists Jesus, destroys the fiber of its warriors, "until Conqueror Death discover them scarce men, Rowling in brutish vices, and deform'd, Violent or shameful death their due reward." It is this picture of the patient, persuasive, diligent Christ, endlessly confident that "winning words" will conquer "willing hearts" that Milton also sketches in *Paradise Regained*.

The concept of Christ as a peaceful, persuasive personality suggests the winning of a new earthly paradise by a slow evolutionary process, a yielding of mankind's perverse barbarism to the inexorable pressure of accumulated intelligence. It assumes perfectibility through the gradual widening of man's knowledge of himself and his environment, a voluntary acceptance of the ideas of Jesus rooted in love and understanding, not in fear of punishment. From endless discussion and persuasion the truth will emerge triumphant and change the hearts of men. This is the principle of the most enlightened toleration tracts of Milton's day; this is the principle Milton had applied to the whole field of secular and religious ideas in his *Areopagitica*. In that unanswerable appeal for liberty he had poured out his faith in the redemption of the world through free dissemination of knowledge, in the gradual ascendancy of truth in an atmosphere of tolerant intellectual conflict. This was to Milton the *summum bonum* of reformation in the middle years of his life. In *Areo-*

pagitica one may read his passing conviction that to regain paradise the world needed more knowledge and discussion than piety and temperance, more an open mind than conviction of sin. Even in his last futile utterance before the Restoration Milton had reiterated his faith in the dynamic power of ideas. The vital deficiency of the tottering Commonwealth had been, claimed Milton, its "corrupt and faulty education." He called for an extension of educational opportunities to all counties of the land, "not in grammar only, but in all liberal arts and exercises." It was education that "would make the people fittest to choose, and the chosen fittest to govern." This faith in the scattering of knowledge, so persistent in the humanist tradition, sprang from Milton's recurring faith in the essential malleability of human nature. It is substantially the same faith assumed by the patient, persuasive Christ, confident of the ultimate triumph of his ideas.

Beneath his faith in redemption through widespread knowledge lay an assumption, however, that Milton could not accept,—i.e., that environmental forces, especially educational handicaps, are responsible for the degradation of mankind: for his spiritual triumph or defeat not man himself, but circumstance, is to blame; lack of knowledge, not a perverse sinfulness, is the root of man's persistent barbarism. Socrates had made this assumption when he had maintained that evil is only ignorance. When Jesus had asked forgiveness of his enemies on the score of their ignorance, he, too, had placed the blame upon circumstance. For Milton to have accepted this conclusion, however, was unthinkable. It would have meant a denial of his cardinal philosophical principle, man's freedom of choice. Man would have become a mechanism incapable of independent action, the toy of inexorable circumstance, whether evil or benign. We must add, nevertheless, that denial of free will would have encouraged an infinite compassion for erring man, a compassion symbolized in the Christ of many sorrows and of forgiveness without end.

Because of these philosophical implications, if for no other reasons, the portrait of the peaceful, persuasive Christ does not

dominate *Paradise Regained*. There are no scenes that dramatize Christ's attitude toward the adulterous woman, the criminal on a nearby cross, or the enemies that hoisted his own. The essential reason for Milton's half-visualization of the compassionate Christ is plain. He preferred Christ as the stern incarnation of reason, Christ as the stern master of himself and judge of others. In Christ as the symbol of love and forgiveness and human brotherhood he could not place his deepest faith. He had often glimpsed this Christ, intellectually recognized his existence. But Milton's nature, we must reluctantly grant, drew back from a personality so soft and forgiving; his own Puritan training had been too rugged and rigorous, his mastery of himself too complete, to admit an infinite sympathy for his erring fellow-men. The toppling of the Puritan commonwealth intensified the bitterness, not the tenderness, of his nature. "In the stern judgments of *Paradise Lost* the boundless charity of the Christ, glimpsed by extremists like Saltmarsh and Walwyn, Winstanley and Roger Williams, flutters helplessly in the offing." In *Paradise Regained* Milton pictures a Christ who prefers justice to mercy, accountability to forgiveness, self-discipline to compassion. Though all these attributes appear in the portrait, though he recognizes the persuasive Christ, Milton cannot believe in the redemption of the world by knowledge and love alone; there must be judgment and punishment:

Milton's portrait of Christ resolves itself, then, into a reflection of Milton himself, with an accent not of love and sympathy, but of temperance and self-mastery as the supreme virtues. In his mind there could be no ultimate harmony between salvation through self-discipline and accountability. In the one the evil genius was ignorance, a deficiency of social environment; in the other, the sinfulness of the individual. The first interpretation was Greek and humanistic, the second Hebraic and Puritan. Milton's mind was too capacious, and his learning too deep, to exclude either hope for the winning of an earthly paradise in the tumultuous pamphleteering years, or in the latter years of his life, when this paradise had receded to the dim horizons of

expectation. Though the civil war had failed, he still could not exclude force, even warfare, as a means to a righteous end. All these paths to utopia Milton had tried and found wanting; he had tried persuasion, he had urged military conquest of the stubborn, he had threatened the English with the doom of the wicked. He still hoped for the day to come when, as Michael had told Adam, "the Earth shall all be Paradise, far happier place then this of Eden," a paradise won partly by persuasion, partly by force. But first must come temperance, stern self-mastery, in the slow march of mankind to these "far happier daies."

by Joe Horrell

WHAT GULLIVER KNEW

"ABSENT Thee From Felicity" is what Mr. W. B. C. Watkins calls his essay¹ on Swift, and the essay makes a nice comparison on this cue. It shows wherein Swift is tragic, like Hamlet. But the essay strikes one with critical misgivings. Why Swift and Hamlet instead of Swift and Shakespeare, or Gulliver and Hamlet? If Mr. Watkins is making a literary analogue, and not one that is biographical or historical, his terms ought to be literary. But Swift is a biographical fact, not a literary fiction, like Hamlet. This essay indicates that critics who want to get away from Swift the savage, lonely, agonized genius of nineteenth-century critics, often get back to the same place unawares by hopefully starting out in the opposite direction but traveling in a circle.

A romantic identification of Swift and Gulliver suits the mood of nineteenth-century critics, but Mr. Watkins, along with Mr. Carl Van Doren, Mr. Eddy, and some other Swift critics, ought to be more in our own mood, which is suspicious of loose, easy identifications of literature and life. Mr. Eddy discredits the author's literary success, I think, when he says that for a master-key to the book "the reader must go . . . to the biography of Jonathan Swift, to the narrative of a life racked with pain." This is also discouraging to the reader, for even if he has a biography handy he may soon find that certain statements in *Gulliver's Travels* are made to prove certain facts about Swift's life, whereupon these facts are used to interpret the statements, round and round.

This tendency to study *Gulliver's Travels* as biography is related to the tendency to view it exclusively as satire. The book

¹*Perilous Balance*. Princeton University Press. 1939.

is a satire, perhaps the severest we have. But no matter how much we explore the reference of its satire, universal as well as temporal (though we are addicted to the temporal), our knowledge of it will not interpret the book, for satire always depends for its conveyance upon some literary form that must first be understood.² Though literature may have a pervasive meaning, it does not diffuse into one meaning but stratifies all of its meanings based on one, the literal. We can no more understand *Gulliver's Travels* by studying only its satire than we can a river system by studying only one of its tributaries.

All of us know from its form that *Gulliver's Travels* is first a fiction. It is because this fact is so obvious, I suppose, that the implications of it have been pursued far.

The book is so anxious to appear a convincing realistic fiction that it pretends, like other early fiction, to be something else, history, called *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, by one Lemuel Gulliver. Because the putative author is the narrator, it can likewise pretend to be autobiography, or a life. These pretenses were in good point when the book was written, for the medium for fiction had long been poetry, and prose was in itself an indication of truth. A glance at titles of eighteenth-century novels, written when it was an immoral waste of time to read fiction, shows the frequency of "history" and "life"—or "history of the life." The singular neglect of fiction by the eighteenth-century critics may be attributable to this pretense of truth. In *Gulliver's Travels* you have the awareness of learning about a man, biography, when the illusion of truth hovers over both. Richard Sympson, Gulliver's friend who

²There is support for this view and later views of mine in Mr. H. M. Dargan's excellent essay, "The Nature of Allegory as Used by Swift," in *Studies in Philology*, XIII (1916), 159-179. It is true Mr. Dargan is not talking about fiction, as I intend to do, but he is talking about allegory, which is always equatable with it. And he is not talking about temporals, for, he says, apart from the "sources" of the *Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*, "the allegory in those works has a positive distinction." This is implicitly saying the fiction has a positive distinction. I know this may seem an obvious statement, but when we forget Mr. Dargan's point about the allegory we may analogically forget this point about the fiction, since a fiction and its allegory have an analogical relationship.

claims to be responsible for the publication, assures readers in an introductory letter that Gulliver is a real man and above all a truthful man, whose fame for truthfulness is such that his neighbors say a thing is "as true as if Mr. Gulliver had spoke it."

Gulliver's Travels, then, is in the form of a fiction. That fact tells us a great deal about the book. As Mr. Eliot says, "It is essential that a work of art should be self-consistent, that an artist should consciously or unconsciously draw a circle beyond which he does not trespass: on the one hand actual life is always the material, and on the other hand an abstraction from actual life is a necessary condition to the creation of the work of art." Though Mr. Eliot is talking about self-consistency, his analogy may be expanded and modified to suit our larger purpose. The subject matter, or material, of *Gulliver's Travels* is life, as in all art. Looking at life, the author draws a circle. It is not until this circle is drawn around the "life" of the book that the author is confronted with the problem of form. How is he going to present this subject matter? If he makes no further "abstraction," but tells us directly everything he sees subject only to the limitations of language, we have a situation in which the quantity and quality of information presented are not affected by the incidents taking place, or the action. There, for that circle at least, we have the sense of knowing all, or being god-like, which is the sense of truth (*i.e.*, history and biography), not fiction.

But Swift does not use this method of viewing his circle of life. Having chosen the form of fiction, he places between us and this circle of character, Gulliver, so that what we see directly is what Gulliver reports, though what we infer may be quite different. The incidents in the circle are happening before his eyes, and sometimes to him, affecting the quantity and quality of information he directly passes on to us. Henry James uses the figure of windows opening upon a scene. The eye is the artist, the scene is the subject, and the window is the "limiting form." For James recognized that the artist, dealing with relations which

really stop nowhere, must "draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so," since both comedy and tragedy lie in this "continuity of things," dependent upon the quality of observation. The eye, we may say, is Swift or the reader (the teller of a story being, as James says, none the less a listener to it), the scene is the circle, and the window is Gulliver. If in this analogy you remove the window or windows, or the whole wall, you have no analogue for fiction, for there may result the unlikeness of seeing face to face.

So we do not look full upon the circle, and within the "ironic contemplation" character of fiction we are aware of a circle different from the one drawn by Gulliver, who is not all-knowing. When the author adopted the fictional form, he took the circle of life and, by interposing Gulliver, in effect rotated it until it appears in projection to be an imperfect circle, though we know it is really the same. This double awareness is one that we always ironically entertain in fiction. *If*, we say, this fictional circle were rotated so that we could look full upon it and not a mere "abstraction" of it, this could be real life, that is, history or biography. The incidents within the circle, of the action, so affect Gulliver that the circle he gives us is projected, or elliptical. But show us the character of Gulliver, his ironic angle, and we can tell something about this circle of life that really lay before him, beyond his projected report. The fictional form must always treat of character, or man fallen and fallible, and it gives the reader the double awareness of seeing through a glass darkly while recognizing a perfect image beyond.

Swift's use of the fictional form, with Gulliver between us and the circle of life, naturally disposed his book to the ironic structure of fiction.⁴ Looking upon this circle, Gulliver does not participate in its full meaning, for if we are to have the illusion of real life we must have the illusion of imperfect knowledge,

⁴It is well to ponder, here and later in this essay, Mr. Dargan's statement: "the irony [in the *Tale of a Tub*], of course, is evident it is an intellectual current running counter to the imaginative sweep of the allegory. . . . If his irony is inconsistent with his allegory, it is because of our own intellectual faculty is frequently inconsistent with our imagination."

which gives the ironic tension between the seeming world and the real world, or the ellipse and the circle. A character who knows all that lies within the circle is not a character, or man, but a god, who cannot tell a fictional or projected story, but only a true one devoid of human tension, because in the realm of the gods where all things are real and real only, world cannot clash against world. This human "quality of bewilderment" is necessary, since as James says, "It seems probable that if we were never bewildered there would never be a story to tell about us; we should partake of the superior nature of the all-knowing immortals whose annals are dreadfully dull so long as flurried humans are not, for the positive relief of bored Olympians, mixed up with them."

This circle analogy is intended simply to clarify the ironic structure of fiction. One term in the analogy now seems to make a suggestion about an unnoticed term. We observed in fiction the rotation of the circle of life; rotation suggests time. The action of which Gulliver is a part causes him to project the circle. The interplay of character and action that causes character development, like the four examples in this work, takes place in proper time, so that the fiction will be plausible. Mere difference in time scheme, we know, marks a radical difference in the nature of drama of various epochs.

Philosophers can make you aware of an abstraction like time by arbitrary systems of numbers that are equally abstract. The literary artist faces the problem of how to make you *feel* time. We have some abstract, or numerical, representation of time in *Gulliver's Travels* in the dates that fix the voyages, but they do not give the sense of time the book conveys. The idea of time agitated the minds of seventeenth-century poets, and it has appropriately agitated Mr. MacLeish in his poem "You Andrew Marvell," which is somewhat abstract in the first stanza, with its

To feel the always coming on
The always rising of the night.

though more concrete in the others. But Marvell himself did well enough for this occasion, and surpassingly well for his poem, in a single figure:

And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.

Here the only nominal reference to time is in the abstract word "eternity," while the concrete image is in terms of space. The concrete representation of time, producing the sense of it, depends upon our sensory awareness of its coördinate, space.

And the sense of the great lapse of time in a man's life in *Gulliver's Travels*, necessary to the development of the man, derives largely from the voyages themselves. Swift's mere saying that Gulliver sails first from Bristol on May 4, 1699, and lands finally on December 5, 1715, gives no sense of time. But when time becomes a series of journeys during which the globe itself seems to turn under Gulliver's feet, you get the sense of time through the mediation of space. From the author of *Chicken Little* to Dante, the journey motif creates the sense of time, and it also creates the sense of destiny.

Because he was writing fiction, Swift had to deal with the time problem, and he dealt with it in an elaborate way. The whole intricate abstract time scheme is erected on a single reference by Gulliver on page one. He says there that his father sent him to Emmanuel College in Cambridge when he was fourteen. Add to this lone age reference various specific references to time elapsed, and you learn that, though Gulliver had been to sea for nine years before, he was near forty at the time he embarked on the first adventure. His four voyages, according to the last book, cover over sixteen years; he returned from Houyhnhnmland at fifty-four, and five years later, the time of writing, he is fifty-nine. Much can happen to a man's view of life in sixteen years like these. Each voyage embraces about four years, but never over two-thirds of this time is spent in each strange land, in Lilliput only one-third. The sense of time is strong in the envelope

of each book, where space is traversed, though there is little of it in the books themselves.

The circle is one of real life. We must remember always, if we are to know more than Gulliver, that the people in each book are not imaginary people, except in a special sense. They are real people presented in special aspects, like the people in the *Inferno*, though Gulliver does not recognize this until, the voyages nearly done, he sees that all the people he thought strange were Yahoos, or ordinary men. Swift asks us, for the *donné* of the book, to grant Gulliver's seeing human beings, really the same human beings, in four different aspects, one general aspect at a time. Abstractly, this is not at all hard to grant, for it is easy to conceive of Gulliver, the type of ourselves, as seeing men petty, or gross, or mentally absurd, or physically repulsive, and seeing them thus one aspect at a time, as we very often do. But concretely, or symbolically, these abstract qualities are embodied in men who are insectile, or gigantic, or hyperintellectual, or animal.

Gulliver is a rather literal man who at first is not much given to abstraction, so that a large part of the irony in his report lies in his failure to connect the symbol with the abstract quality it symbolizes. It does not become clear to him until the last book that he is and has been among human beings, his own kind. If we think of the fiction, it is easy to see why Swift symbolizes these abstract qualities: he gains concreteness that allows us to feel time. And he must have concreteness because Gulliver, the observer, is not an all-knowing or even a much-knowing person able to see in ordinary people these qualities and understand them, but is the type of human kind, who sees best what is forced upon his senses, understanding only part of this and misunderstanding the rest.

Before the first adventure began, Gulliver had already spent nearly ten years at sea, and now, tired of voyaging, wanted to follow his profession as surgeon and live at home with his wife and family. But from the start of his narrative Gulliver shows a marked inability to get along with the real world, and three indigent years again drive him to sea as a ship's surgeon. At

thirty-eight, after much voyaging, he must have had no illusions about the sea. Gulliver, as he says in the last book, was "born of plain honest parents, who were just able to give me a tolerable education," and like the true Englishman he has pledges to both land and sea. These conflicting pledges creates the constant tension in his seafaring life. And at thirty-eight, when he sailed for adventure that was to take him to Lilliput, Gulliver had succeeded little in being wise and much in being gullible.

For the first book Gulliver simply records incidents as they occur, in straightforward narrative, with very little reflection upon them. "The charm of Gulliver for the young," Leslie Stephen says, "depends upon an obvious quality, which is indicated in Swift's report of the criticism by an Irish bishop, who said that 'the book was full of improbable lies, and for his part he hardly believed a word of it.'" He has no previous fantastic experience to bear upon his report, and he is not yet the intellectual writer who is conditioned to see certain things best. But there is projection of the circle, for Gulliver continually sees things according to the scale of his real world, which he understands, and instead of reflecting upon the relativity of the scale, or the aspect of man he sees, he seldom reflects at all. The Emperor's turret is "at least five feet high"; the page seems "to be somewhat longer than my middle finger"; the loaves of bread are "about the bigness of musket bullets"; the shoulder and legs and loins he eats are "smaller than the wings of a lark." The irony in Gulliver's report as it relates to the senses of sight and sound is exemplified when he says:

And to show the sharpness of their sight towards objects that are near, I have been much pleased with observing a cook pulling a lark, which was not so large as a common fly; and a young girl threading an invisible needle with invisible thread.

And also:

He [the Emperor] was amazed at the continual noise it [the watch] made and the motion of the minute-hand, which

he could easily discern; for their sight is much more acute than ours. . . .

Gulliver's broad and panoramic observation in Lilliput gives a geographical picture of the country. Though the narrative is consecutive, it proceeds more by shifts of scenes than by passage of time, and is broken more by these shifts than by, say, comparisons with England as in the second book. The scenes are varied naturally, so that we do not recognize here, as later, that Gulliver is consciously or unconsciously reporting only what to him seems fantastic. He reports absurdities without deliberation upon them. With no critical comment, he tells us about the wars waged for generations by the Lilliputians against armies of enemy Blefescu organized by Big-Endian exiles from Lilliput, over the question of which end of an egg should be broken. After he has captured the Blefescudian fleet, Gulliver opposes the Emperor's design to make Blefescu a province and destroy the Big-Endian exiles, whereupon all people would be compelled to break eggs at the little end, leaving him the sole monarch of the world—and he opposes this design by citing "topics of policy as well as justice." There is also the reputedly scandalous affair of Gulliver and Flimnap's wife, who was said to have "taken a violent affection for my person." Gulliver exonerates the lady with a long and elaborately detailed alibi, but he says this scandal marked his decline in favor at court.

All this, if we speak of the author, is the magnificent understatement at which Swift is adept. But we must remember, too, that fictionally it is Gulliver's quality of bewilderment, for he sees through the glass darkly. The satire, always intellectual, belongs to Swift, who can see much more of the circle of life than anybody in it, and who must be careful, therefore, not to break his fictional hero upon the rack of his own satire.

We should notice that part of Swift's method is to let the ironic implications of one book be illustrated and realized in a succeeding book. Since Lilliput is first, it brings out no ironic implications of a previous book, and that may account for the near absence of reflection in it. Because of the physical scale,

Gulliver naturally does not report much on smells, but he ironically illustrates, for us, his own grossness to Lilliputians when he tells how he extinguished Her Imperial Majesty's burning apartment, and how the Empress, "conceiving the greatest abhorrence of what I had done, removed to the most distant side of the court, firmly resolved that those buildings should never be repaired for use." He sees no farther than that. From the mere appearance of the scale he can see that men in Lilliput are petty, but he cannot understand wherein that fact makes him gross. For, even if he were given to reflection, there is no previous fantastic experience for him to reflect upon, and the fact of his grossness in Lilliput will not be realized until he gets to Brobdingnag, which will illustrate new facts for him later to realize.

Similarly, man's dislike of small creatures, though they be recognized as human, is illustrated at the beginning of the Lilliputian adventure where Gulliver says of the Lilliputians, when they were doing no worse than feeding him, "I confess I was often tempted, while they were passing backwards and forwards on my body, to seize forty or fifty of the first that came into my reach, and dash them against the ground." He restrains himself, not by any brotherly feeling, but by the "remembrance of what I had felt, which probably might not be the worst they could do, and the promise of honour I made them." Though scaffolds and turrets and pulleys compensate the physical disparity, the affective gap remains. When six of his offenders are delivered to him for punishment, he puts five of them in his coat pocket and pretends he will eat the sixth alive. "The poor man squalled terribly, and the colonel and his officers were in much pain, especially when they saw me take out my penknife." But he spares the man, later gaining a good reputation at court for his act, and at the time the "people were highly obliged at this mark of my clemency."

The theme of the first book, the littleness of man, is not realized in many of its ironic implications, by Gulliver, until he gets to Brobdingnag. The very first Brobdingnagian he encounters fears him as a "small dangerous animal," one that should be held so

that it might not "scratch or bite him," the way, says Gulliver, weasels are held in England; and he fears the while that the man "would dash me against the ground, as we usually do any little hateful animal which we have a mind to destroy." The man's wife screams at the sight of him, he says, as "women in England do at the sight of a toad or a spider." And, shortly, a child of a year old, given Gulliver to indulge it, "seized me by the middle, and got my head in his mouth, where I roared so loud that the urchin was frightened, and let me drop, and I should infallibly have broke my neck if the mother had not held her apron under me."

The second adventure is not a simple reversal or inversion of the first. The Gulliver who after a year's voyage arrives in Brobdingnag is not equal and opposite to the Gulliver cast up on Lilliputian shores. For one thing he is four years older, about forty-two, and for another, he has spent nearly a year among insectile people. Though there is little awareness of time in the first adventure itself, and less in the second, each adventure is set in a time frame, so that the cumulative force of Gulliver's past experience may plausibly bear upon his report.

The point is, then, that the irony of his report of the second adventure shows more than physical difference from the first. Brobdingnag not only raises, for him, another astounding scale, but this scale is so astonishingly reversed that it tends to illustrate, latterly for this bewildered man, new implications of the adventures in Lilliput which he now tries to interpret. Interpretation and reflection, marking a difference in this book, break simple narrative structure into one less consecutive and more subject to intellectual control, the book itself usually seeming a recollection of incidents that elaborate the physical scale. This is our original Gulliver plus the Lilliputian experience. The first adventure seems to lose, for him, some of its bewildering quality, while the new one has bewilderment all its own which later adventures will drive him to interpret, with all the interpretations those of Lemuel Gulliver, our hero, and therefore human, fallible, and bewildered.

In Lilliput, Gulliver viewed things according to the simple

physical scale of his world, but he seldom indulged in abstraction or intellectualization by, say, mentioning England. In the second book England or Europe appears on nearly every page. There is continual comparison that goes beyond mere physical awareness to indicate attempted intellectual awareness. The Brobdingnagians appear so huge when he first sees them that he does not immediately recognize them as men at all, and first says "huge creatures," then "inhabitants," next "monsters," later "barbarians." Finally he recovers his Lilliputian experience, which tempers his observation, and reflects.

In this terrible agitation of mind I could not forbear thinking of Lilliput, whose inhabitants looked upon me as the greatest prodigy that ever appeared in the world. . . . I reflected what a mortification it must prove to me to appear as inconsiderable in this nation as one single Lilliputian would be among us. . . . Undoubtedly philosophers are in the right when they tell us, that nothing is great or little otherwise than by comparison.

Gulliver professes disgust at the sight of the monstrous breast that gives a baby suck. His report, nauseous in detail, with a singular lack of emotional balance, provokes reflections upon, first, the supposed fair skins of English ladies, which are really as coarse as these, and second, the fair complexion of the Lilliputians, which appeared to him when there the fairest in the world, though we recall that he made no mention of the fact at the time. With all his ability at recollection, Gulliver seems unable to get a proper focus on the thing at hand, and his eye falls quickly upon the woman's monstrous breast cancer, the lice rooting like swine, and the odorous maids of honor.

While his emotional faculty sleeps, his intellectual awareness, which was not very evident in Lilliput, makes him try to understand why the ladies smell. "I conceive," he says, "that my sense was more acute in proportion to my littleness, and that those illustrious persons were no more disagreeable to their lovers, or to each other, than people of the same quality are with us in England." Though Gulliver measures all things by the scale of his

own world, failing to see these people as illustrative of special aspects of it, his confidence in the scale of his world unconsciously weakens. An inverse emotional development cuts across his new intellectuality. The gross people of Brobdingnag, he can *now* see, are not so pretty as the Lilliputians were, and the more he intellectualizes the more he sees quite unemotionally that the women in England are very coarse too. The conversations with the King of Brobdingnag climax these developments, giving Gulliver new realization of Lilliput while revealing implication for future adventures to make clear.

Gulliver's report of these "several conversations" with the King seems far from the narration of incidents as they actually occur. In the first of these, when Gulliver has talked at length to the King about his own England, "the prejudices of his education prevailed so far, that he could not forbear taking me up in his right hand, and stroking me gently with the other, after an hearty fit of laughter, asked me whether I were a Whig or a Tory." And, further, "he observed how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I." As he goes on, Gulliver burns with indignation, not as a Lilliputian, but as an Englishman whose country and kind have been dishonored. When Gulliver willingly tells him about England, the King, with searchingly pointed questions, wrings damning answers out of Gulliver that he does not willingly give. In a later audience, after the King has compared his questions with Gulliver's answers, he takes him into his hands and strokes him gently, and coolly delivers his terrifying indictment of

*Mr. Eddy says: "The objections of the King of Brobdingnag to Gulliver are precisely the objections of Gulliver to the statecraft of Lilliput." In "precisely" this is an overstatement and in "objections" it is a loose reading, for the whole statement is true only in part and in a special way. In Lilliput, when he is little given to reflection, Gulliver raises no explicit objections (i.e., those not naively ironic), though he gives a share of his report to political pettinesses like parties of High-Heels and Big-Endians told him by the Secretary. After he hears this account of political differences, he even agrees to act for the Emperor's safety against the Blefuscudians, but he protests that as a foreigner it would not become him to "interfere with parties." Again, the ironic implications of Lilliput do not come to realization until Brobdingnag, where, to keep the fiction going, there will be plenty more. In Brobdingnag, these political trivialities are explicitly brought to bear on his own world and Lilliput.

Gulliver's own world by Gulliver's own account, concluding, "But by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wringed and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

Gulliver's report of these conversations with this "prince of excellent understanding," when he senses the direction they begin to take, shows panic. Once the King's indictment is spoken, he is angry and resentful, yet, we must notice, gravely disturbed. Though he will not accept the scale of what he thinks in a new world, he nonetheless loses complete faith in that of his own, and so he tries to explain away the King's indictment by attributing it to the "miserable effects of a confined education."

The ironic implications of the "odious vermin" passage, progressively confronting Gulliver until the last book, show why we cannot read the first two books as a complete fiction, unless, knowing as little as Gulliver, we read them on their elementary level of appearance, like a child. This situation with the King's statement is another link in the chain of motivation, for Gulliver's relation to it demands the parallel but conclusive similar situation in the fourth book, the climax, where questions left hanging find dubious answer in Gulliver's mind. Conversely, neither is the last book a unit, for it cannot plausibly let Gulliver decide in an unconvincingly short period of time questions it does not raise with sufficient compulsion. Lilliput and Brobdingnag are part of that prior compulsion, and so is Laputa.

Though he sees goodness in the King, Gulliver stubbornly rejects his arguments because they and their author, he thinks, do not fit the pattern of his world. The King, horrified, commands him to say no more about unheard-of cannon and gunpowder, and Gulliver attributes this indignation to a "strange effect of narrow principles and short views." Their learning, it follows, is deficient, including only morality, history, poetry, and mathematics, in the last of which they excel. "But the last of these is wholly applied to what may be useful in life, to the im-

provement of agriculture, and all mechanical arts; so that among us it would be little esteemed. And as to ideas, entities, abstractions, and transcendentals, I could never drive the least conception into their heads." Laputa will provide the commentary, since it is rife with crazy mathematicians.

Next Gulliver visits the Laputians, people who are up in the air. He has never seen, he says, "a race of mortals so singular in their shapes, habits, and countenances." In Brobdingnag, because of the disparate physical scale, he has had almost a fixation for the grossness of the body. But we see here that all of Gulliver's report indicates a difference in scale that is mental, not physical. He has little or no description of the body itself except to say the Laputians, heads all declined to right or left, with one of the eyes turned inward and the other toward the zenith; and the whole import of this remarking of countenances will prove to be mental. The peculiar quality of these shapes, habits, and countenances is that, completely lacking physicality, they seem to figure forth the mind, and the people seem to be not people but states of mind. They are so completely intellectual, and so neglectful of all their senses, that flappers must arouse them to awareness of their mouths and ears for conversation and of their eyes lest they damage themselves while walking. They are as completely intellectual as the Yahoos will prove to be completely sentient.

There is an interesting division in this society that Gulliver's report obliquely remarks but never explains. The flappers, who must always be present for social intercourse, are of the lower caste evidently comprising sensible people. Gulliver says nothing directly about this other half, but he notes in nearly every incident the presence of the flapper, since without the flapper's presence there could be no incident. When he is about to leave the island he recalls that, while there, "I conversed only with women, tradesmen, flappers, and court-pages . . . by which at last I tendered myself extremely contemptible; yet these were the only people from whom I could ever receive a reasonable answer."

The Laputians themselves, devotees of those abstract arts of

mathematics and music, have no balance of emotion. They seem to regard their women as animals, or sentient creatures like the lower caste. Gulliver tells us, "If they would, for example, praise the beauty of a woman, or any other animal, they describe it by rhombs, circles, parallelograms, ellipses, and other geometrical terms, or by words of art drawn from music." As a result, the women select their gallants from the towns on the continent below, where they would like to be, and they are safe with their lovers before the very eyes of the husband if, Gulliver says, "he be but provided with paper and implements, and without his flapper at his side."

Gulliver noted, without comment, that the Lilliputians were excellent practical mathematicians. The Brobdingnagians, too, were good mathematicians, but excessively practical, he thought, since that made them unlike the English. And now the Laputians show what impracticality is, who give Gulliver an ill fit in clothes after taking his measure with quadrant, rule, and compass, and who build ill-fitted houses because workmen cannot follow their abstract plans.

Later, at Lagado, the metropolis, he visits the Academy of Projectors, founded by persons who had made a short stay up at Laputa, since whose return the country has gone to waste through innumerable experiments and ideas for its improvement. He cites these experiments at length. Gulliver's report, though devoted largely to absurdities, shows a new awareness that these people are remarkably like his own kind, and he comes closer to recognizing the obvious fact than he had in Brobdingnag or Lilliput.

This third book is unlike the others, for when it has run only about half their length, Gulliver begins his journey home. But the circuitous journey home this time is marked by two important diversions that are part of this whole adventure. These diversions are found in Glubbdubdrib and Luggnagg, which, unlike those of the longer adventures, must be understood from general themes and motivations of the whole work.

Upon the circle of life Gulliver has observed is based each of

the three adventures that comprise the first three books. Adding complexity to these, there is also the circle of life he observes each time he returns home, and thus we have clash of world on world. For three adventures the circle rotates. In the terms of James' analogy, the window (Gulliver) through which we view the living scene, has changed its color and shape; and so a window ceases to be a very convincing analogy. Before we are done with the third book, these unsensuous, hyperintellectual Laputians may teach us that our circle analogy will likely prove too intellectual and too unsensuous for the human problem we meet here.

We have followed Gulliver from his thirty-eighth to his fiftieth year in these three voyages, watching his early naïveté become pessimistic gloom, but time of itself is a concept of no sensuous quality. Gulliver gives the cue when at the end of the second book he speaks of his "evil destiny." Destiny, as Spengler says, is not the abstract understanding of life, but is the feel or sense of life, such as Gulliver's concrete experience might give: "In the Destiny-idea the soul reveals its world-longing, its desire to rise into the light to accomplish and actualize its vocation." Though he does not understand it, Gulliver is increasingly aware of this force that works where tension is great between his two worlds, land and sea.

II

Documenting our earliest speculation, we may notice now, concretely, how a theme slowly develops in this chronological frame, with its proper motivation, as Gulliver after each voyage tries to reconcile two seemingly hostile worlds.

Part of the motivation for the development theme of misanthropy is Gulliver's experience with men of each unfortunate outbound voyage. The first brings misfortune by chance when the ship splits on a rock. In the second adventure, his comrades, pursued by a Brobdingnagian, desert him while they are all ashore seeking water. During the third voyage pirates overhaul them, and a fellow European, failing to have Gulliver cast over-

board, persuades the more lenient Japanese captain into setting him adrift in a canoe, though the Japanese does smuggle him adequate provisions. On the fourth voyage, the treacherous crew turn to piracy and exile Gulliver, their captain, on a lonely shore.

The destiny we must contemplate is the destiny motivated in and by the story, or what made him return to the sea, not what originally drove him to it. Economic necessity, he tells us, drove him to the voyage that ended in Lilliput. In a good fiction no "evil destiny" could drive him to sea the first time, for there is prior motivation. The voyages are this motivation. Gulliver lets us know, for example, that he returned from Lilliput with enough money to settle a comfortable income on his family. But, he says, "I stayed but two months with my wife and family; for my insatiable desire of seeing foreign countries would suffer me to continue no longer." It was in Lilliput, while talking about laws and institutions, that Gulliver made clear he was talking about originals, and not "the most scandalous corruptions into which these people are fallen by the degenerate nature of man." The grim context of experience thematically develops this casual observation on the degeneracy of man into Gulliver's gloomy *Weltanschauung* that motivates and climaxes the whole work with the fourth book.

"Nature and fortune," not necessity, drive him to sea again, and this time he goes as passenger instead of surgeon. In Brobdingnag, where the scale complimented him not at all, Gulliver read much, especially in history and morality, learning in one treatise "how diminutive, contemptible, and helpless an animal was man in his own nature," and how "nature was degenerated in these latter declining ages of the world, and could now produce only small abortive births in comparison of those in ancient time." Though he may resist this view, along with his astounding physical insignificance and the King's indictment, all Brobdingnag goes into the refractive well of experience. And when he returns he has much trouble in meeting again the scale of his world that he defended so strenuously against charges by the Brobdingnagian King.

The sailors who rescue him appear to be pygmies, and in talking to the Captain, "I told him, I had likewise observed another thing, that when I first got into the ship, and the sailors stood all about me, I thought they were the most contemptible little creatures I had ever beheld." Gulliver seems unaware that he is repeating the King's indictment, now realized, which had incensed him when pronounced, but which now disturbs his repossession of his world. When he gets home and sees the littleness of the houses, the trees, the cattle, and the people, "I began to think myself in Lilliput." His wife rushes out to embrace him, and he stoops lower than her knees, thinking she could not otherwise reach his mouth; and there is similar difficulty when his daughter kneels to ask his blessing. This emotional scene, where Gulliver shows no reciprocal emotion, exemplifies his difficulty in meeting his world again. The man who had longed for his "domestic pledges" stays at home, we see, about one month, and again there is no economic need that drives him to another voyage, but only the "thirst I had of seeing the world." Though his wife protests that he never go to sea again, Gulliver declares "my evil destiny so ordered that she had not power to hinder me."

Gulliver's fated insatiable desire for experience, or his "world-longing," is implicit in this episode with the necromancers at Glubbdubdrib, where, he says, if he had any apprehensions at the sight of spirits, his curiosity soon overcame them. And now he understands this motive that drives him to call up "vast numbers of illustrious persons" from the dead, for he thus tries "to gratify that insatiable desire I had to see the world in every period of antiquity placed before me." As the great men of the dead from the past to his own latter age march before him, revealing the true motives of their actions, he again realizes a latent theme, knowing "how low an opinion I had of human wisdom and integrity." The concrete data of experience are slowly forcing Gulliver towards conclusions about them, which he will make in the fourth book. Even now, as he sees this succession of people as they appeared in the world, "it gave me melancholy reflections

to observe how much the race of human kind was degenerate among us, within these hundred years past."

This mood, which draws near self-conscious misanthropy, yields for a moment to joy when he hears of the marvellous struldbruggs in Luggnagg, who surely will be safe from the world's mutability and man's decay. For a moment he vainly hopes he will find in them man redeemed from his own nature, and Gulliver's will, like Tithonus' bitter folly, becomes so strong for some perfection, something above the inexorable degeneracy of the world and man, that it is able to convince his intellect this can be so. Word of the struldbruggs seems to lighten the weight of three astounding adventures that never provoked exclamation before, as he cries:

Happy nation where every child hath at least a chance for being immortal! Happy people who enjoy so many living examples of ancient virtue, and have masters ready to instruct them in the wisdom of all former ages! But happiest beyond all comparison are those excellent struldbruggs, who born exempt from that universal calamity of human nature, have their minds free and disengaged, without the weight and depression of spirits caused by the continual apprehension of death.

Though his report has seldom left events before, Gulliver rhapsodizes upon himself as a fortunate struldbrugg, and now, understanding the difference between life and death, he could with them "remark the several gradations by which corruption steals into the world, and oppose it in every step, by giving perpetual warning and instruction to mankind; which, added to the strong influence of our own example, would probably prevent that continual degeneracy of human nature so justly complained of in all ages." Then comes disillusion faster than Tithonus' when Gulliver learns what the struldbruggs really are, and how they, like the blind beggar to Emma Bovary, image the living dead. He now sees, but cannot fully realize, that escape from life is found not in longer life but in death; and in the final book the burden of life becomes so great for him that he willingly risks the loss of it.

Gulliver returns from Laputa after much yearning for home, and again he returns with wealth. He stays home for five months. Though he says he was happy, we must note how blandly he says in the next sentence, "I left my poor wife big with child, and accepted an advantageous offer made me to be Captain of the *Adventure*." This would be strange conduct for a prosperous man, near fifty, at peace with his world. In three strange worlds he has doggedly clung to his own, implying, though with decreasing force, that it is the real world by which all others must be measured. Petty people, gross people, hyperintellectual people—the implication of Gulliver's report successively rejects all these as not his kind, Gulliver being unable to see that they are. He has never made a deliberate choice between two seemingly alien worlds because he has never recognized the possibility of choice, or the presence of a crisis. He has always felt little real conflict with the strange people, for he has implicitly considered the plane of any action of his own above, or below, or unlike the plane of those around him, with conflict mere grotesquerie. Self-conscious conflict and crisis will come in the last book when he thinks he meets his own kind, and then he will be able to close the affective gap between his and a truly alien world. Only then can he give for himself final and irrevocable answers to all the questions of his odyssey.

This discussion of some of the themes and motivations, or fictional outlines, of the first three books, with some of their fictional problems, indicates that I cannot agree with critics like Mr. Eddy, who say the last book "is a distinct unit, differing radically from the earlier *Voyages*, and complete in itself." The fourth book is, yes, a distinct unit, being one of four. And the voyages, as we have seen, do differ from one another, all of them, because Swift is writing about real life, which is complex, not simple, and can hardly excuse Gulliver from like complexity, especially at the end. But "complete in itself"? Anybody who takes seriously this derogation of the whole work should try to read the last book with the first three out of mind. This is next to impossible to do, for the kind of observation made in

the last book demands the kind of observer Gulliver is, and the kind of observer he is demands the motivation of the first three books. Otherwise, these horses that sit on their haunches eating dinner, or ride about in vehicles drawn by human creatures, or neigh their observation on Gulliver's "bad accent," are the mere horseplay of circus comedy, and the whole book is an absurd and ill-conceived tirade on man. But the prior impact of three strange adventures does not let the horses appear so to Gulliver. The chief fictional difference in the book is that, except for the first and concluding chapters, naïve narrative, consecutive and direct, here reaches its lowest ebb. Gulliver says the conversations with the Houyhnhnm Master are an "extract" containing a "summary of the most material points." Gulliver's intellectual tarnish has taken the lure off strange things that in Lilliput made simple story. To my view, *Gulliver's Travels* is self-consistent like any work of art, and the fourth book is implicit in the first three.

The unifying fictional conception that informs the four books, as I have suggested, is a series of dominant themes about man arranged by contrast, some of them supporting variations and each adding complexity to its predecessor. The last book offers a new complication, for the thematic aspect of man that we see in the Yahoos has counterpoint in the horses, or Houyhnhnms, so that Gulliver for the first time is among creatures obviously not his own kind. Readers have imaginative troubles with this book. Keeping in mind Gulliver's ironic position, they should remember that he does not recognize his own kind in the first three voyages and only latterly in this one. And I should like them, until we get to the book itself, to entertain the notion that the same imaginative *donné* that grants degenerated man can grant perfected horses, though Gulliver has a way of talking about the human beings as if they were animals and the animals as if they were human beings. The irony of his situation is greater than in other adventures because the situation is infinitely more complex, and so there will be a new projection of his report. If we are to comprehend the sustained irony, we must note how

carefully Swift, as in other books, takes Gulliver from one world into another. The order of details in Gulliver's report is therefore important, more important here than anywhere else, I believe, because of the extreme complexity of the book.

The whole passage where Gulliver first sees the Yahoos must be read with great care, for it has a key position and function. And it is a brilliant piece of writing in which Swift, like Dante in the *Inferno*, brings a few details into a narrow but fiercely bright focus, so that his observer may ironically condemn this epitomized ugliness before he knows the idea this ugliness conveys.⁶ That slow realization working out through painful experience, with late recognition of what concrete symbols mean, is the tragic, or human, quality of books that probe life.

As soon as Gulliver has fallen upon a beaten road he sees three kinds of tracks, those of human feet, of cows, and of horses. Immediately he sees "several animals," or Yahoos, though he does not know what they are. He gives us a detailed picture of these "singular and deformed" creatures which, to us, are obviously man in a state of nature, with, as he says later "differences common to all savage nations." Gulliver again shows no awareness that he is seeing once more a special aspect of his own kind. It is significant in the close juxtaposition of details that, though he does not fit the Yahoos into the human tracks he saw, he immediately recognizes cows as cows and Houyhnhnms as horses. The circle of life Gulliver presents is projected, for he cannot see now, as we derivatively see from our ironic contemplation, that these "strange creatures" are the ultimate of degenerated man "in these latter declining ages of the world."

That the Yahoos represent this aspect of man is indicated not only by the motivation found in earlier books, but also by thematic references in this book. After he learns what they are, he

⁶We may note here an interesting fragment from Coleridge's lecture notes on Dante: "Picturesque throughout—the admirable balance of the natural and spiritual. Pathos and loveliness; but still the Venus masculus—stern. The reality such as really [?] to impress the feeling of a book of travels in an unknown country—in a still greater degree and with less *intonality* than in Swift's GULLIVER, great as this is."

still cannot account for "their degenerate and brutal nature," but he learns later of the tradition that two Yahoos, forsaken on Houyhnhnmland by their companions, retired to the mountains, "and degenerating by degrees, became in process of time much more savage than those of their own species in the country from whence these two original came." Before he knows what they are, Gulliver is able to pass ironic judgment upon these men that is impersonal, and judgment that damns them just as it had damned other men in other books. He is able to say, concluding his description of the Yahoos, "I never beheld in all my travels so disagreeable an animal, nor one against which I naturally conceived so strong an antipathy." He meets the horses after a loathsome encounter with the Yahoos in which several leap into a tree and discharge their excrement upon his head.

By a sort of compensation, horses, which, as Gulliver says later, are the "most generous and comely animal" man has, begin to appear to him now, though horses, as beautiful as the "strange creatures" are ugly. Again aware of two worlds, this time two worlds in reality, Gulliver again rejects the world of his own kind, the Yahoos.

But in this book something happens unlike anything before: Gulliver is made to recognize that the Yahoos are his own kind, and that the two worlds he has always fondly entertained are the same.* (This recognition, at first demonstrated, is realized completely when, later, a female Yahoo tries to join with him.) The choice between strange people and his own kind, always resisted on each adventure, now appears to have been no possible choice at all. Now comes the stab of recognition, for at last

*Mr. Watkins says: "The Yahoos were to represent mankind only in his animal aspects, in a state of degradation. As Swift proceeded, however, he tended more and more to identify absolutely mankind and the Yahoos." The first statement is true. But the second illustrates the sort of critical confusion that follows when one shifts without warning between fiction and fact. This "absolute" identification is made by *Gulliver*, and *against* evidence of his own report even as Mr. Watkins seems to see the evidence. As we have said earlier, it is not the business of a character to understand all the evidence, at least if there is going to be any fiction. And even if in his letters Swift seems to think man a Yahoo, he thinks he is in his "animal aspects"—unless, denying his fiction, we say the author must have the same blindness as the man he creates.

he knows that in condemning the world of Yahoos he has condemned his own, and that all the strange people were Yahoos, the Brobdingnagians "least corrupted." The pressure of his will for perfection, always increasing as the voyages pass man before him, drives him now to accept the world of horses.

After chapter three, in which comes recognition with a reversal in Gulliver's whole view and conduct, he speaks of all men as Yahoos, but he calls these horses "Houyhnhnms," never again "horses." And as he goes on talking about the horses, the peculiar quality of his report is its gradual playing-down of horse details, though it obliquely remarks them.

Gulliver's report of the Houyhnhnms, according to my interpretation, is an ultimate in sustained fictional irony, to be compared with one of another kind, James' *The Turn of the Screw*. It has, I believe, bewildered critics, who complain of the exalted view of the horse, because they have not taken it as such. Historical scholars, untiring in their efforts to connect an author's life with his work, give plenty of clubs, since none but a very stupid author could adopt the view of either Gulliver or the Houyhnhnm Master. Swift did not hold either view, or any single view, for the author of dramatic work knows that the full abstract force of his work, if it is well conceived, will not inform a single character or scene, but everything, so that the full meaning demands what has been called "ironic contemplation" of the whole. The crucial matter, again, is what James calls the "imputing of intelligence." The most enlightening comment I can find on this fourth book is in the work of John Boyle, Fifth Earl of Orrery, his *Remark on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift*, written in 1851 as a commentary for his son. Boyle damns Swift for this last book, but in doing so he makes a brilliant, if not complimentary, observation on the Houyhnhnms.

They are incapable of doing wrong, therefore they act right. It is surely a very low character given to creatures, in whom the author would insinuate some degree of reason, that they act inoffensively, when they have neither the motive nor the power to act otherwise. Their virtuous qualities are only negatives.

If this statement is rearranged with a view to the book as a fiction, so that the "author" is Gulliver, it offers an excellent commentary on the ironic structure of the fourth book, though complimenting Swift's fiction instead of disparaging his fact. Citations will exemplify this matter.

Swift, we know, has a deliberate way, through a naïve observer like Gulliver, of juxtaposing details real and unreal, innocent and calculated, so that our acceptance of the former version of a situation may also entail acceptance of the latter. As Gulliver says of his nurse in Brobdignag, the child Glumdalclitch, "She was very good-natured, and not above forty foot high, being little for her age." Or, beginning his journey home in the third book, "There is a strict alliance between the Japanese Emperor and the King of Luggnagg, which affords frequent opportunities of sailing from one island to the other."

In the fourth book Swift further complicates details. Gulliver tells how he learned the language, as he does in every book. When he first sees the horses, they *seem* to talk, though Gulliver never fails to mention their *neighing*, a horse detail. He says, early, "I plainly observed, that their language expressed the passions very well, and the words might with little pains be resolved into an alphabet more easily than the Chinese." When he hears them say "Yahoo," a good horse sound, "I boldly pronounced "yahoo," in a loud voice, imitating, at the same time, as near as I could, the neighing of a horse." He learns the language "which they pronounce through the nose and throat," though this takes him longer, we find by checking, than it had before. Gulliver never says directly that what he really learns is to whinny and neigh. But soon, as the horse scale is accepted, the horse language becomes the norm and that of his world the departure, so that he regrets his "bad accent" and, later, the need for translating his Master's remarks into "our barbarous English."

Their language, unlike the Laputian, is given to concreteness, or to understanding one another by receiving "information of facts," and Gulliver must use "cases" and "suppositions" to con-

vey to his Master the idea of man's crime and vice, which make him "lift up his eyes with amazement and indignation." The horses, naturally, do not have literature or letters. The sailors who rescue Gulliver "fell a laughing at my strange tone in speaking, which resembled the neighing of a horse." And we cannot fail to notice that Gulliver, after he has told his Master that horses in his country have "not the least tincture of reason," says of his pet horses at home after his return, "My horses understand me tolerably well; I converse with them at least four hours every day."

By recapitulating, we see how all this fits in the general outline of the fiction. Before the virtues of the horses, Gulliver has seen the particular vices of man revealed in his voyages, his experience awakening in him the slow awareness of these same vices in his world at home. He suddenly is made to realize that all are Yahoos of the race of men. Then, failing to find in the horses the particular vice of Yahoos, he attributes to them the opposite virtue. Gulliver ironically suggests this when he explains his uncomplimentary report of his own kind, saying, "But I must freely confess, that the many virtues of those excellent *quadrupeds*, placed in opposite view to human corruptions, had so far opened my eyes and enlarged my understanding, that I began to view the actions and passions of man in a very different light, and to think the honour of my own kind not worth managing." As Boyle says, "Their virtues are all negatives," by which he means, if I understand him, the mere absence of the opposite vice. The general situation in the fourth book may be stated thus: the Yahoos have the form of man and the general vices; the Houyhnhnms have neither the form nor vices. So Gulliver, who cannot find man's ideal virtues in man, attributes virtue to horses where there is mere absence of vice.

We remember that the misanthropic ideal is Gulliver's. We observed in the second book Gulliver's striking intellectual development and how his emotional faculty suffers. This unbalance continues in the third adventure when he is among those highly intellectual, unloving Laputians. By the fourth book,

Gulliver is far from the man who, in Lilliput, drank in all experience through a dilettant sensibility, for now the exclusive arbiter of his restricted knowledge of the world in the intellect, cold and unemotional, which weighs and even disputes the report of his senses. These matters are exemplified in the magnificent conclusion of the work.

Gulliver chooses a world of horses. He offers no opposition, like that in Brobdingnag, when his Master mentions his "affectation" of walking on his two hind feet (he later imitates the "gait" of a horse), or the inferior utility of his body as compared with that of a horse. But Gulliver is a man, and he cannot forever lead the life of a horse, even a perfected horse, though we are horrified at the degree to which he succeeds. The Houyhnhnms compel him to leave. When, taking leave of the Master, "I was going to prostrate myself to kiss his hoof, he did me the honour to raise it gently to my mouth." Gulliver's "catastrophe" is not, as he thinks, that he must leave the Houyhnhnms, but that having accepted a world of horses he must return to a world of men. Forced back into this world, he is willing to risk his life to escape it, for like Oedipus he has lost all care of his body.

Swift is able to demonstrate consummately Gulliver's fateful unbalance of emotion and intellect by placing him in a family scene where emotion must play. Though the whole work looks forward to this scene, there is special motivation in his relation to his rescuers, whom he finds intolerable, not just contemptible like those in the second book. When he sees his wife and family, who greet him with surprise and joy, those "domestic pledges" he had longed for on other voyages,

I must freely confess the sight of them filled me only with hatred, disgust and contempt, and the more by reflecting on the near alliance I had to them. . . . And when I began to consider, that by copulating with one of the yahoo species I had become a parent of more, it struck me with the utmost shame, confusion, and horror.

His wife embraces him and he swoons at the touch of that

"odious animal." For a whole year he cannot endure the presence of his wife and children, the smell of them being intolerable. Next to his horses, the groom is his favorite, because of the agreeable smell he contracts in the stables. Last week he began permitting his wife to sit at dinner at the far end of the table, though the smell of the Yahoos continues so offensive he must stop his nose with rue, lavender, or tobacco leaves. This detail "at the far end of the table" is especially interesting. Gulliver knows intellectually that all people smell, whether it be the captain and his whole crew of sailors or his wife at the far end of the table. And his intellect has become so exclusively keen it is able to convince his senses.

This climax and the later hope for rectitude and reconciliation show, for their source, that in Gulliver's whole experience what was first dilemma became crisis. Three times his dilemma was exile among his own people, and crisis did not take shape until this exile was real, the difference lying in the possibility of choice. For with his development come recognition and reversal, producing pity and fear, when against the dominant theme of three adventures another theme plays, the horses, and the contrapuntal action becomes complex enough to sustain tragedy. Gulliver's undeliberate and ironic change from ignorance to knowledge, following upon the unbalance of his character, to be realized needs only this climactic situation that Swift provides. And with this concrete situation Swift exemplifies a tragic type—man gone emotionally blind through the excessive keenness of his intellectual vision.

by Cleanth Brooks

THE CASE OF MISS ARABELLA FERMOR: A RE-EXAMINATION

ALDOUS HUXLEY'S lovers, "quietly sweating, palm to palm," may be conveniently taken to mark the nadir of Petrarchism. The mistress is no longer a goddess—not even by courtesy. She is a congeries of biological processes and her too-evident mortality is proclaimed at every pore. But if we seem to reach, with Huxley's lines, the end of something, it is well to see what it is that has come to an end. It is not the end of a naïve illusion.

The Elizabethans, even those who were immersed in the best tradition of Petrarchism, did not have to wait upon the advent of modern science to find out that women perspired. They were thoroughly aware that woman was a biological organism, but their recognition of this fact did not prevent them from asserting, on occasion, that she was a goddess, nevertheless. John Donne, for instance, frequently has it both ways indeed, some of the difficulty which the modern reader has with his poems may reside in the fact that he sometimes has it both ways in the same poem. What is relevant to our purposes here is not the occurrence of a line like "Such are the sweat drops of my mistress' breast" in one of the satiric "elegies," but the occurrence of lines like

Our hands were firmly cemented
With a fast balm, which thence did spring

in a poem like *The Ecstasy*. The passage quoted, one may argue, glances at the very phenomenon which Huxley so amiably describes; but Donne has transmuted it into something else.

But if Donne could have it both ways, most of us, in this latter day, cannot. We are disciplined in the tradition of either-or, and lack the mental agility—to say nothing of the maturity of attitude—which would allow us to indulge in the finer distinctions and the more subtle reservations permitted by the tradition of both-and. Flesh or spirit, merely a doxy or purely a goddess (or alternately, one and then the other), is more easily managed in our poetry, and probably, for that matter, in our private lives. But the greater poems of our tradition are more ambitious in this matter: as a consequence, they come perhaps nearer the truth than we do with our ordinary hand-to-mouth insights. In saying this, however, one need by no means confine himself to the poetry of Donne. If we are not too much blinded by our doctrine of either-or, we shall be able to see that there are many poems in the English tradition which demonstrate a thorough awareness of the problem and which manage, at their appropriate levels, the same kinds of synthesis of attitudes which we associate characteristically with Donne.

Take Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, for instance. Is Belinda a goddess, or is she merely a frivolous tease? Pope himself was, we may be sure, thoroughly aware of the problem. His friend Swift penetrated the secrets of the lady's dressing room with what results we know. Belinda's dressing table, of course, is bathed in a very different atmosphere; yet it may be significant that Pope is willing to allow us to observe his heroine at her dressing table at all. The poet definitely means to give us scenes from the green room, and views from the wings, as well as a presentation "in character" on the lighted stage.

Pope, of course, did not write *The Rape of the Lock* because he was obsessed with the problem of Belinda's divinity. He shows, indeed, that he was interested in a great many things: in various kinds of social satire, in a playful treatment of the epic manner, in deflating some of the more vapid clichés that filled the love poetry of the period, and in a dozen other things. But we are familiar with Pope's interest in the mock-epic as we are not familiar with his interest in the problem of woman as god-

dess; and moreover, the rather lurid conventional picture of Pope as the "wicked wasp of Twickenham"—the particular variant of the either-or theory as applied to Pope—encourages us to take the poem as a dainty but rather obvious satire. There is some justification, therefore, for emphasizing aspects of the poem which have received little attention in the past and, perhaps, for neglecting other aspects of the poems which critics have already treated in luminous detail.

One further point should be made: if Pope in this account of the poem turns out to be something of a symbolist poet, and perhaps even something of what we call, in our clumsy phrase, a "metaphysical poet" as well, we need not be alarmed. It matters very little whether or not we twist some of the categories which the literary historian jealously (and perhaps properly) guards. It matters a great deal that we understand Pope's poem in its full richness and complexity. It would be an amusing irony (and one not wholly undeserved) if we retorted upon Pope some of the brittleness and inelasticity which we feel that Pope was inclined to impose upon the more fluid and illogical poetry which preceded him. But the real victims of the manoeuvre, if it blinded us to his poem, would be ourselves.

Pope's own friends were sometimes guilty of oversimplifying and reducing his poem by trying to make it accord with a narrow and pedantic logic. For example, Bishop Warburton, Pope's friend and editor, finds an error in the famous passage in which Belinda and her maid are represented as priestesses invoking the goddess of beauty. Warburton feels forced to comment as follows: "There is a small inaccuracy in these lines. He first makes his heroine the chief priestess, then the goddess herself." The lines in question run as follows:

First rob'd in white, the nymph intent adores
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.
A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears. . . .

It is true that Pope goes on to imply that Belinda is the chief

priestess (by calling her maid the "inferior priestess"), and that, a few lines later, he has the maid "deck [Belinda] the goddess with the glittering spoil." But surely Warburton ought not to have missed the point: Belinda, in worshipping at the shrine of beauty, quite naturally worships herself. Whose else is the "heav'nly image" which appears in the mirror to which she raises her eyes? The violation of logic involved is intended and is thoroughly justified. Belinda *is* a goddess, but she puts on her divinity at her dressing table; and, such is the paradox of beauty-worship, she can be both the sincere devotee and the divinity herself. We shall certainly require more sensitive instruments than Bishop Warburton's logic if we are to become aware of some of the nicest effects in the poem.

But to continue with the dressing-table scene:

The fair each moment rises in her charms
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face:
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.

It is the experience which the cosmetic advertisers take with a dead level of seriousness, and obviously Pope is amused to have it taken seriously. And yet, is there not more here than the obvious humor? Belinda is, after all, an artist, and who should be more sympathetic with the problems of the conscious artist than Pope himself? In our own time, William Butler Yeats, a less finicky poet than Pope, could address a "young beauty" as "dear fellow artist."

In particular, consider the "purer blush." Why purer? One must not laugh too easily at the purity of the blush which Belinda is engaged in painting upon her face. After all, may we not regard it as a blush "recollected in tranquility," and therefore a more ideal blush than the actual blush which the spontaneous overflow of motion—shame or hauteur on an actual occasion—might bring? If we merely read "purer" as ironic for its opposite, "impurer"—that is, uns spontaneous and therefore unmaidenly—

we shall miss not only the more delightful aspects of the humor, but we shall miss also Pope's concern for the real problem. Which is, after all, the mere maidenly blush? That will depend, obviously, upon what once considers the essential nature of maidens to be; and Belinda, we ought to be reminded, is not the less real nor the less feminine because she fails to resemble Whittier's robust heroine Maude Muller.

One is tempted to insist upon these ambiguities and complexities of attitude, not with any idea of overturning the orthodox reading of Pope's irony, but rather to make sure that we do not conceive it to be more brittle and thin than it actually is. This fact, at least, should be plain: regardless of what we may make of the "purer blush," it is true that Belinda's dressing table does glow with a special radiance and charm, and that Pope, though amused by the vanity which it represents, is at the same time thoroughly alive to a beauty which it actually possesses.

There is a further reason for feeling that we shall not err in taking the niceties of Pope's descriptions quite seriously. One notices that even the metaphors by which Pope characterizes Belinda are not casual bits of decoration, used for a moment, and then forgotten. They run throughout the poem as if they were motifs. For instance, at her dressing table Belinda is not only a priestess of "the sacred rites of pride," but she is also compared to a warrior arming for the fray. Later in the poem she is the warrior once more at the card table in her conquest of the two "adventurous knights"; and again, at the end of the poem, she emerges as the heroic conqueror in the epic encounter of the beaux and belles.

To take another example, Belinda, early in the poem, is compared to the sun. Pope suggests that the sun recognizes in Belinda a rival, and fears her:

Sol through white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day.

But the sun's fear of Belinda has not been introduced merely in order to give the poet an opportunity to mock at the polite

cliché. The sun comparison appears again at the beginning of Canto II:

Not with more glories, in th'ethereal plain,
The sun first rises over the purpled main,
Than issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.

Belinda is like the sun, not only because of her bright eyes, and not only because she dominates her special world ("But every eye was fix'd on her alone"). She is like the sun in another regard:

Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.

Is this general munificence on the part of Belinda a fault or a virtue? Is she shallow and flirtatious, giving her favors freely to all; or, does she distribute her largesse impartially like a great prince? Or, is she simply the well-bred belle who knows that she cannot play favorites if she wishes to be popular? The sun comparison is able to carry all these meanings, and therefore goes past any momentary jest. Granting that it may be overingenious to argue that Belinda in Canto IV (the Cave of Spleen) represents the sun in eclipse, still the sun comparison does appear once more in the poem, and quite explicitly. As the poem closes, Pope addresses Belinda thus:

When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust;
This lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

Here, one notices, that the poet, if he is forced to concede that Belinda's eyes are only metaphorical suns after all, still promises that the ravished lock shall have a celestial eternity, adding, like the planet Venus, "New glory to the shining sphere!" And here Pope, we may be sure, is not merely playful in his metaphor. Belinda's name has actually been inscribed in the only heaven in which a poet would care to inscribe it. If the sceptic still has any

doubts about Pope's taking Belinda very seriously, there should be no difficulty in convincing him that Pope took his own work very seriously indeed.

We began by raising the question of Belinda's status as a goddess. It ought to be quite clear that Pope's attitude toward Belinda is not exhausted in laughing away her claims to divinity. The attitude is much more complicated than that. Belinda's charm is not viewed uncritically, but the charm is real: it can survive the poet's knowledge of how much art and artifice have gone into making up the charm.

To pursue the matter of attitude farther still, what, after all, is Pope's attitude toward the iridescent little myth of the sylphs which he has provided to symbolize the polite conventions which govern the conduct of maidens? We miss the whole point if we dismiss the sylphs as merely "supernatural machinery." In general, we may say that the myth represents a qualification of the poet's prevailingly naturalistic interpretation. More specifically, it represents his attempts to do justice to the intricacies of the feminine mind. For in spite of Pope's amusement at the irrationality of that mind, Pope acknowledges its beauty and its power.

In making this acknowledgement, he is a good realist—a better realist, indeed, than he appears when he tries to parade the fashionable ideas of the Age of Reason as in his *Essay on Man*. He is good enough realist to know that although men in their "learned pride" may say that it is Honor which protects the chastity of maids, actually it is nothing of the sort: the belles are not kept chaste by any mere abstraction. It is the sylphs, the sylphs with their interest in fashion notes and their knowledge of the feminine heart:

With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toy-shop of the heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.

Yet the myth of the sylphs is no mere decoration to this es-

sentially cynical generalization. The sylphs do represent the supernatural, though the supernatural reduced, of course, to its flimsiest proportions. The poet has been very careful here. Even Belinda is not made to take their existence too seriously. As for the poet, he very modestly excuses himself from rendering any judgment at all by ranging himself on the side of "learned pride:"

Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd
To maids alone and children are reveal'd:
What, though no credit doubting wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.

In the old wives tale of the child's fairy story may lurk an item of truth, after all. Consider the passage carefully.

"Fair" and "innocent" balance "maids" and "children." Yet they act further to color the whole passage. Is "fair" used merely as a synonym for "maids"—e.g., as in "the fair?" Or, is it that beauty is easily flattered? The doctrine which Ariel urges Belinda to accept is certainly flattering: "Hear and believe! thy own importance know/ . . . unnumbered spirits round thee fly. . . ." Is "innocent" to be taken to mean "guiltless," or does it mean "naïve," perhaps even "credulous?" And how do "fair" and "innocent" influence each other? Do the fair believe in the sylphs because they are still children? (Ariel, one remembers, begins by saying:) If e'er one vision touch thy *infant* thought. . . ." Pope is here exploiting that whole complex of associations which surround "innocence" and connect it on the one hand with more than worldly wisdom and, on the other, with simple gullibility.

Pope, as we now know, was clearly unjust in suggesting that Addison's advice against adding the machinery of the sylphs was prompted by any desire to prevent the improvement of the poem. Addison's caution was "safe" and natural under the circumstances. But we can better understand Pope's pique if we understand how important the machinery was to become in the final version of the poem. For it is Pope's treatment of the sylphs which allows him to develop, with the most delicate

modulation, his whole attitude toward Belinda and the special world which she graces. It is precisely the poet's handling of the supernatural—the level at which he is willing to entertain it—the amused qualifications which he demands of it—that makes it possible for him to state his attitude with full complexity.

The sylphs are, as Ariel himself suggests, "honor," though honor rendered concrete and as it actually functions, not honor as a dry abstraction. The sylphs' concern for good taste allows little range for critical perspective or a sense of proportion. To Ariel it will really be a dire disaster whether it is her honor or her new brocade that Belinda stains. To stain her honor will certainly constitute a breach of good taste—whatever else it may be—and that for Ariel is enough. Indeed, it is enough for the rather artificial world of manners with which Pope is concerned.

The myth of the sylphs is, thus, of the utmost utility to Pope: it allows him to show his awareness of the absurdities of a point of view which, nevertheless, is charming, delightful, and filled with a real poetry. Most important of all, the myth allows him to suggest that the charm, in part at least, springs from the very absurdity. The two elements can hardly be separated in Belinda; in her guardian, Ariel, they cannot be separated at all.

In this connection, it is well to raise specifically the question of Pope's attitude toward the "rape" itself. We certainly underestimate the poem if we rest complacently in the view that Pope is merely laughing at a tempest in a teapot. There is such laughter, to be sure, and late in the poem, Pope expresses his own judgment of the situation, employing Clarissa as his mouthpiece. But the tempest, ridiculous though it is when seen in perspective, is a real enough tempest and related to very real issues. Indeed, Pope is able to reduce the incident to its true importance, precisely because he recognizes clearly its hidden significance. And nowhere is Pope more careful to take into account all the many sides of the situation than just here in the loss of the lock itself.

For one thing, Pope is entirely too clear-sighted to allow that

the charming Belinda is merely the innocent victim of a rude assault. Why has she cherished the lock at all? In part at least, "to the destruction of mankind," though mankind, of course, in keeping with the convention, wishes so to be destroyed. Pope suggests that the Baron may even be the victim rather than the aggressor—it is a moot question whether he has seized the lock or been insnared by it. Pope does this very skilfully, but with great emphasis:

Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springs we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Indeed, at the end of the poem, the poet addresses his heroine, not as victim but as a "murderer:"

For, after all the murders of your eye,
When after millions slain, yourself shall die. . . .

After all, does not Belinda want the Baron (and young men in general) to covet the lock? She certainly does not want to retain possession of the lock forever. The poet naturally sympathizes with Belinda's pique at the way in which the Baron obtains the lock. He must, in the war of the sexes, coax her into letting him have it. Force is clearly unfair, though blandishment is fair. If she is an able warrior, she will consent to the young man's taking the lock, though the lock still attached to her head—and on the proper terms, honorable marriage. If she is a weak opponent, she will yield the lock, and herself, without any stipulation of terms, and will thus become a ruined maid indeed. Pope has absolutely no illusions about what the game is, and is certainly not to be shocked by any naturalistic interpretation of the elaborate and courtly conventions under which Belinda fulfills her natural function of finding a mate.

On the other hand, this is not at all to say that Pope is anxious

to do away with the courtly conventions as a pious fraud. He is not the romantic anarchist who would abolish all conventions because they are artificial. The conventions not only have a regularizing function: they have their own charm. Like the rules of the card game in which Belinda triumphs, they may at points be arbitrary; but they make the game possible, and with it, the poetry and pageantry involved in it in which Pope very clearly delights.

The card game itself, of course, is another symbol of the war of the sexes. Belinda must defeat the men; she must avoid that debacle in which

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.

She must certainly avoid at every cost becoming a ruined maid. In the game as played, there is a moment in which she is "Just in the jaws of ruin and Codille," and gets a thrill of dangerous excitement at being in so precarious a position.

If the reader objects that the last comment suggests a too obviously sexual interpretation of the card game, one must hasten to point out that a pervasive sexual symbolism informs, not only the description of the card game, but almost everything else in the poem, though here, again, our tradition of either-or may cause us to miss what Pope is doing. We are not forced to take the poem as either sly bawdy *or* as delightful fantasy. But if we are to see what Pope actually makes of his problem, we shall have to be alive to the sexual implications which are in the poem.

They are perfectly evident—even in the title itself, and the poem begins with an address to the Muse in which the sexual implications are underscored:

Say what strange motive, goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord to assault a gentle belle?
Oh say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?

True, we can take *assault* and *reject* in their more general mean-

ings, not in their specific Latin *senses*, but the specific meanings are there just beneath the surface. Indeed, it is hard to believe, on the evidence of the poem as a whole, that Pope would have been in the least surprised by Sir James Frazer's later commentaries on the ubiquity of hair as a fertility symbol. In the same way, one finds it hard to believe, after some of the material in the "Cave of Spleen" section ("And maids turn'd bottles call aloud for corks"), that Pope would have been too much startled to come upon the theories of Sigmund Freud.

The sexual implications become quite specific after the "rape" has occurred. Thalestris, in inciting Belinda to take action against the Baron, cries:

Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair?
While the fops envy and the ladies stare?

Even if we take *ravisher* in its most general sense, still the sexual symbolism lurks just behind Thalestris' words. Else why should honor be involved as it is? Why should the Baron desire the lock, and why should Belinda object so violently, not as to an act of simple rudeness, but to losing "honor" and becoming a "degraded toast?" The sexual element is involved at least to the extent that Belinda feels that she cannot afford to suffer the Baron, without protest, to take such a "liberty."

But a deeper sexual importance is symbolized by the whole incident. Belinda's anguished exclamation—

Oh hadst thou cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!

carries on, unconsciously, the sexual suggestion. The lines indicate, primarily, of course, Belinda's exasperation at the ruining of her coiffure. The principal ironic effect, therefore, is one of bathos: her angry concern for the prominence of the lock deflates a little her protests about honor. (Something of the bathos carries over to the sexual parallel: it is hinted, perhaps, that for the belle the real rape might lose some of its terrors if it could

be concealed.) But though Belinda's vehemence gives rise to these ironies, the exclamation itself is dramatically appropriate; and Belinda would doubtless have blushed to have her emphasis on "any" interpreted literally and rudely. In her anger, she is obviously unconscious of the *faux pas*. But the fops whose admiring and envious comments on the exposed trophy Thalestris can predict—"Already hear the horrid things they say"—would be thoroughly alive to the unconscious *double entendre*. Pope's friend, Matthew Prior, wrote a naughty poem in which the same *double entendre* occurs. Pope himself, we may be sure, was perfectly aware of it.

In commenting on Pope's attitude toward the rape, we have suggested by implication his attitude toward chastity. Chastity is one of Belinda's most becoming garments. It gives her her retinue of airy guardians. As a proper maiden, she will keep from staining it just as she will keep from staining her new brocade. Its very fragility is part of its charm, and Pope becomes something of a symbolist poet in suggesting this. Three times in the poem he refers to the breaking of a frail china jar, once in connection with the loss of chastity, twice in connection with the loss of "honor" suffered by Belinda in the "rape" of the lock:

Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw. . . .

Or when rich China vessels, fall'n from high,
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie!

Thrice from my trembling hands the patch-box fell;
The tott'ring china shook without a wind. . . .

Pope does not say, but he suggests, that chastity is, like the fine porcelain, something brittle, precious, useless, and easily broken. In the same way, he has hinted that honor (for which the sylphs, in part, stand) is something pretty, airy, fluid, and not really believed in. The devoted sylph who interposes his "body" between the lock and the closing shears is clipped in two, but honor suffers little damage:

Fate urged the shears, and cut the sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again).

It would be easy here to turn Pope into a cynic; but to try to do this is to miss the point. Pope does not hold chastity to be of no account. He definitely expects Belinda to be chaste; but, as a good humanist, he evidently regards virginity as essentially a negative virtue, and its possession, a temporary state. He is very far from associating it with any magic virtue as Milton had in his *Comus*. The only magic which he will allow it is a kind of charm—a *je-ne-sais-quoi* such as the sylphs possess.

Actually, we probably distort Pope's views by putting the question in terms which require an explicit judgment at all. Pope accepts in the poem the necessity for the belle to be chaste just as he accepts the necessity for her to be gracious and attractive. But in accepting this, he is thoroughly alive to the cant frequently talked about woman's honor, and most of all, he is ironically, though quietly, resolute in putting first things first. This, I take it, is the whole point of Clarissa's speech. When Clarissa says:

Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man must die a maid,

we need not assume with Leslie Stephen that Pope is expressing a smug masculine superiority, with the implication that, for a woman, spinsterhood is the worst of all possible ills. (There is actually no reason for supposing that Pope thought it so.) The real point is that for Belinda perpetual spinsterhood is the worst of all possible ills. In her own terms, it would be a disaster to retain her locks forever—locks turned to gray, though still curled with a pathetic hopefulness, unclaimed and unpossessed by any man. Belinda does not want *that*; and it is thus a violation of good sense to lose sight of the fact that the cherished lock is finally only a means to an end—one weapon to be used by the warrior in the battle, and not the strongest weapon.

Clarissa is, of course, promptly called a prude, and the battle begins at once in perfect disregard of the "good sense" that she

has spoken. Pope is too fine an artist to have it happen otherwise. Belinda *has* been sorely vexed—and she, moreover, remains charming even as an Amazon. After all, what the poet has said earlier is sincerely meant:

If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.

Though Pope obviously agrees with Clarissa, he is neither surprised nor particularly displeased with his heroine for flying in the face of Clarissa's advice.

The ensuing battle of the sexes parodies at some points the combat in the great epic which Milton fashioned on the rape of the apple. But the absurdity of a battle in which the contestants cannot be killed is a flaw in Milton's great poem, whereas Pope turns it to beautiful account in his. In *Paradise Lost*, the great archangels single each other out for combat in the best Homeric style. But when Michael's sword cleaves the side of Lucifer, the most that Milton can do with the incident is to observe that Lucifer feels pain, for his premises force him to hurry on to admit that

. . . th'Ethereal substance clos'd
Not long divisible. . . .

Lucifer is soon back in the fight, completely hale and formidable as ever. We have already seen how delightfully Pope converts this cabbage into a rose in the incident in which the sylph, in a desperate defense of the lock, is clipped in two by the shears.

The absurdity of a war fought by invulnerable opponents gives an air of unreality to the whole of Milton's episode. There is a bickering over rules. Satan and his followers cheat by inventing gunpowder. The hosts under Michael retort by throwing the celestial hills at the enemy; and the Almighty, to put a stop to the shameful rumpus, has the Son throw the trouble-makers out. But if the fight were really serious, a fight to the death, why does the heavenly host not throw the hills in the first place? Or, why

does not the Almighty cast out the rebels without waiting for the three days of inconclusive fighting to elapse? The prevailing atmosphere of a game—a game played by good little boys and by unmannerly little ruffians, a game presided over by the stern schoolmaster, haunts the whole episode. The advantage is wholly with Pope here. By frankly recognizing that the contest between his beaux and belles is a game, he fulfills his basic intention.

The suspicion that Pope in this episode is glancing at Milton is corroborated somewhat by Pope's general use of his celestial machinery. The supernatural guardians in *The Rape of the Lock* are made much of, but their effectiveness is hardly commensurate with their zeal. The affinities of the poem on this point are again with *Paradise Lost*, not with the *Iliad*. In Milton's poem, the angels are carefully stationed to guard Adam and Eve in their earthly home, but their protection proves, in the event, to be singularly ineffectual. They cannot prevent Satan from finding his way to the earth; and though they soar over the Garden, their "radianc Files,/Daz'ling the Moon," they never strike a blow. Even when they discover Satan, and prepare to engage him in combat, God, at the last moment, prevents the fight. Indeed, for all their numbers and for all their dazzling splendor, they succeed in determining events not at all. They can merely (for instance, Raphael) give the human pair advice and warning. Milton, though he loved to call their resonant names and evidently tried to provide them with a realistic function, was apparently so fearful lest he divert attention from Adam's own freely made decision that he succeeded in giving them nothing to do.

If this limitation constitutes another ironical defect, perhaps, in Milton's great epic, it fits Pope's purposes beautifully. For, as we have seen, Pope's supernatural machinery is as airy as gossamer, and the fact that Ariel can do no more than Raphael, advise and warn—for all his display of zeal—again fulfills Pope's basic intention. The issues in Pope's poem are matters of taste, matters of "good sense," and the sylphs do not violate the human limitations of this world which Pope has elected to describe and in terms of which judgments are to be made. Matters of

morality—still less, the ultimate sanctions of morality—are never raised.

To return to the battle between the beaux and belles: here Pope beautifully unifies the various motifs of the poem. The real nature of the conventions of polite society, the heroic pretensions of that society as mirrored in the epic, the flattering genial ragging. Indeed, the clichés of the ardent lover become the contention absurd and pompous, do indicate, by coming alive on another level, the true, if unconscious, nature of the struggle.

No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

"Like Gods they fight" should mean in the epic framework "with superhuman energy and valor." And "nor dread a mortal wound" logically completes "Like Gods they fight"—until a yet sterner logic asserts itself and deflates the epic pomp. A fight in which the opponents can be wounded is only a sham fight. Yet, this second meaning is very rich after all, and draws "Like Gods they fight" into its own orbit of meanings: there may be extra zest in the fighting because it is an elaborate game. One can make godlike gestures because one has the invulnerability of a god. The contest is godlike, after all, because it is raised above the dust and turmoil of real issues. Like an elaborate dance, it symbolizes real issues but can find room for a grace and poetry which in a more earnest struggle are lost.

I have said earlier that Pope, by recognizing the real issues involved, is able to render his mock-epic battle meaningful. For the beaux of Hampton Court, though in truth they do not need to dread a mortal wound, can, and are, prepared to die. "To die" had at this period, as one of its submeanings, to experience the consummation of the sexual act. (Donne, Dryden, and even Shakespeare use the term with a glance at this meaning; sceptics may consult the second song in Dryden's *Marriage à La Mode*.) Pope's invulnerable beaux rush bravely forward to achieve such a death; for the war of the sexes, when fought seriously and to the death, ends in such an act.

The elegant battleground resounds with the cries of those who "die in metaphor . . . and song." In some cases, little more is implied than a teasing of the popular clichés about bearing a "living death" or being burnt alive in Cupid's flames. But few will question the sexual implications of "die" in the passage in which Belinda overcomes the Baron:

Nor fear'd the chief th'unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die. . . .
"Boast not my fall, (he cried) insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low."

The point is not that Pope is here leering at bawdy meanings. In the full context of the poem, they are not bawdy at all—or, perhaps we put the matter more accurately if we say that Pope's *total* attitude, as reflected in the poem, is able to absorb and digest into itself the incidental bawdy of which Pope's friends, and obviously Pope himself, were conscious. The crucial point is that Pope's interpretation of Belinda's divinity does not need to flinch from bawdy implications. The further meanings suggested by the naughty *double entendres* are not merely snickering jibes which contradict the surface meaning: rather those further meanings constitute the qualifying background against which Belinda's divinity is asserted. Pope's testimony to Belinda's charm is not glib; it is not thin and one-sided. It is qualified, though not destroyed by a recognition of all the factors involved—even of those factors which seem superficially to negate it. The touch is light, to be sure, but the poem is not flimsy, not mere froth. The tone is ironical, but the irony is not that of a narrow and acerb satire; rather it is an irony which accords with a wise recognition of the total situation. The "form" of the poem is, therefore, much more than the precise regard for a set of rules and conventions mechanically apprehended. It is, finally, the delicate balance and reconciliation of a host of partial interpretations and attitudes.

It was observed earlier that Pope is able to reduce the "rape" to its true insignificance because he recognizes, as his characters

do not, its real significance. Pope knows that the rape has in it more of compliment than of insult, though he naturally hardly expects Belinda to interpret it thus. He does not question her indignation, but he does suggest that it is, perhaps, a more complex response than Belinda realizes. Pope knows, too, how artificial the social conventions really are, and he is thoroughly cognizant of the economic and biological necessities which underlie them—which the conventions sometimes seem to mask and sometimes to adorn. He is therefore not forced to choose between regarding them as either a hypocritical disguise or as a poetic and graceful adornment. Knowing their true nature, he can view this outrage of the conventions with a wise and amused tolerance, and can set it in its proper perspective.

Here the functional aspect of Pope's choice of the epic framework becomes plain. The detachment, the amused partonage, the note of aloof and impartial judgment—all demand that the incident be viewed with a large measure of aesthetic distance. Whatever incidental fun Pope may have had with the epic conventions, his choice of the mock-epic fits beautifully his general problem of scaling down the rape to its proper insignificance. The scene is reduced, and the characters become small and manageable figures whose actions can always be plotted against a larger background.

How large that background is has not always been noticed. Belinda's world is plainly a charming, artificial world; but Pope is not afraid to let in a glimpse of the real world which lies all about it:

Meanwhile, declining from noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine;
The merchant from th' exchange returns in peace,
And the long labours of the toilet cease.
Belinda now. . . .

It is a world in which business goes on and criminals are hanged for all that Belinda is preparing to sit down to ombre. This

momentary glimpse of the world of serious affairs, of the world of business and law, of the world of casualness and cruelty, is not introduced merely to chivvel the high concerns of polite society into ironical insignificance, though its effect, of course, is to mock at the seriousness with which the world of fashion takes its affairs. Nor is the ironical clash which is introduced by the passage un-calculated and unintentional: it is not that Pope himself is unconsciously callous—without sympathy for the “wretches.” The truth is that Pope’s own perspective is so scaled, his totality of view so honest, that he can afford to embellish his tempest in a teapot as lovingly as he likes without for a moment losing the sense of its final triviality. A lesser poet would either have feared to introduce an echo of the “real” world lest the effect prove to be too discordant, or would have insisted on the discord and moralized the contrast between the gay and the serious too heavily and bitterly. Pope’s tart is perfect. The passage is an instance of the complexity of tone which the poem possesses.

JANUARY FEAST

The deft circumcision of the new year
Relieves the systems we have sworn
Through dying time, the withered career
Of fallen leaves, badges we have worn.

Nor must I then deny the resinous foliage
Of pungent mountains in the coniferous season,
The raw delight of fresh-cut spruce,
The pulse of streaming sap-burst lesion.

From the geared ecstasy of Christmas
We soar on successive wings
While all the lowly vale resounds
Of sharp reports, percussive Springs.

The mutilated god is bathed in snow,
Clear-rung chill for reddening limbs.
The stunning brook resumes its savage flow
And roaring ice explodes its Easter hymns.

This renascence which swirls the rock
Swarms in the bladed, frozen breast.
Immersed in this careening shock
We now must greet the body's guest.

by Joseph Bennett

TROY

Now in the shadow onslights of the mind
Noiseless crumbling swells the shattered town
Upon the thick elastic air, and stones,
Spraying, ride the twilight underground.

What carnage stirred the vaporous plains
Runs now with the mist where slain heroes,
Struck from a sky thunderous with rains,
Pass and repass on the wavering shore.

Here Helen sways above the tremorous plains
And walks the sacred park where laurel-crowned
Immortals move amidst the shadowy boughs.
From their lyres they strike the shaking sounds

Which hang and drift above the singing ground,
Creep through the mist, and enter mortal men
Whose sighing brains are ringing, rung, and wound
Until they stream among the swaying choir.

by Joseph Bennett

EGYPT'S QUEEN

Cleopatra waved her head,
Her goddess asp, and drew the moon
Upon her stick; a tame balloon
Whose cold flamboyance sphered her bed.

Her lovers in this blaze she wrung
And incandesced. Fatally she shocked—
Her knife deep in their beating lungs.
Cannibal orchid, desert-locked,

She hears her river creak beyond
Her gates; flood-tiding Nilus booms
Down the long necropolis
Of pylons, obelisks and tombs.

Enstreamed on the timeless bosom cold,
This flower passes, this crimson streak.
Defiant taxidermy holds
In the mummy the arrogant eye, the beak.

by Joseph Bennett

THE CYCLES OF THE SOUL

Golden-thighed Pythagoras
Danced across the swaying stage;
The planets round him swayed in chorus
And shook like streaking lamps before our gaze.

Certain notes crazed his legs, ringing
Clear in the golden shell. The spheres
Song-strained him to the wheel, spinning
Round it on their singing gyres.

A golden disk, the spokes revolve
And whirl Pythagoras in rage
Of gorgeous beams. His soul, involved,
Turns in the flashing sun and stage.

This birth, blind-fire before our eyes,
This change, strength in the heart of gold,
Turns in the brimming mind, and thighs
Turn trembling in the fiery mould.

by Joseph Bennett

EXTERIOR OF A TACITURN GRANDPARENT

He had height, Quaker dignity, thick curly hair
The grandfather I remember.

Even in age the outline of his frame was spare,
His backbone long and limber.

When he drove the greys, he carried his rein well wrapped
About a fist, controlling slow and quicker;
Norman and Dandy trotted, their blinders flapped,
The whip had a scarlet cracker.

(Should one of his daughters sit in seclusion behind
The carriage window that lowered by cord and tassel,
Her silken rear was fashionably defined
By a slightly prouberant bustle.)

But frequently, for occasions of less state,
He used a jump-seat jagger
With one gelding, hitched and parted from its running-mate
By a diminutive nigger.

In winter he sat in a massive upholstered chair.
He came and went in silence.
Except for fishing-poles, the room in which he slept was some-
what bare;
From his four-poster hung a valance.

He had lore of crab nets, rods and spring's elusive shoals
Of fishes up a river;
His melons flourished and his way with foals

Framed by his farm, his mill, his cider-apple trees,
This man stood grave, aloof in the child's view
And how speak with authority, apart from these,
Of one she never knew?

by Eleanor Glenn Wallis

COME CLOSE TO ME

Come close to me./The snow is blowing
And soon will whiten field and tree.
The last gray tones of day are going.
The night is dark. Come close to me.

Against the window beats the cold
Of leafless boughs and vanished birds.
Come let me stir the fire and hold
Your hand in quiet that speaks my words.

Cold is the night for roofless sheep,
And colder yet for homeless men.
Many that fall in frozen sleep
Will never see dawn break again.

Before they sink among the trees,
Do memories of warmth arise,
Of burning coals as bright as these,
Mirrored in loved and happy eyes?

And if with time we take our road
To freeze by field and whitened tree,
Remember, too, the coals that glowed
So short a while. Come close to me.

by Chad Walsh

IN THE CAGE

Darwin's daemon, Barnum's pride,
The razor-fanged misanthropist
Scurries up and down to hide
The orange in his Yahoo-fist.

Archetype of ancient greed
By a present greed beset,
In whose features one can read
What he would as soon forget,

Clio's child will stop to chew
All his craft cannot conceal,
Cram full cheeks, and then outspew
Much of pulp, and less of peel.

Gaily as he perpetrates
Evolution's epigrams,
Mocking those he emulates,
And, by his emulation, damns,

This anthropoidal scholiast
Argues for the world's great age,
Yet doubly underscores the vast
Monkeyhood of master-sage.

by Carlos Baker

by J. Duncan Spaeth

CONVERSATIONS WITH PAUL ELMER MORE

Romantics, Pro and Con.

*To break a lance
In the fair fields of old Romance.*

DURING Paul Elmer More's residence at Princeton, it fell to my lot to lecture at the University on the Romantic Poets, and I have always regarded it as a special mark of Paul More's humanity that he did not excommunicate one so tainted with the romantic heresy, which in his own early Princeton days still had priority in his mind over all other heresies. He was pleased, I think, to learn that I required my students to read, mark, and inwardly digest his essay on Byron, first printed as the preface to his Riverside Edition of Byron's Poems. I have just re-read that essay and still think it the most just and discriminating study of the conflict between the "Romantic" and the "Classic" elements in Byron. But I could not subscribe to his disparagement of Shelley, a disparagement not as fashionable then (1905) as it has since become, nor could I sympathize with his scorn for "this petty prying nature cult in Keats and Shelley." His contrast between Byron's *Manfred* and Shelley's *Prometheus* still seems to me ex parte pleading. He praises Shelley's *Cenci* for its concentrated power, but charges him with "resorting to monstrous and illegitimate means," while he himself slurs over the Astarte motif in *Manfred*.

All my efforts to break a lance in defense of Shelley proved abortive. Remembering his aversion to "shadowy meaningless

words," I once asked him to explain the meaning of "endure," which puzzled me in Shelley's lines—

When hearts have once mingled
Love first leaves the well-built nest,
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.

When he "passed," remarking that this was a striking example of vague thinking, I ventured to suggest that Shelley, who had been reading Goethe, had in mind the German verb *entbehren* (in the sense of "enduring the loss of something"), for which there is no English equivalent. (cf. Goethe's "Entbehren sollst du." *Learn to renounce.*) Though I tried to convince him that Shelley in asserting the necessity of renunciation was imposing limitations on man's expansive desires, he endured, without accepting, my exegesis.

When his friend T. S. Eliot lectured at Princeton, I asked him to introduce the speaker, which he did with characteristic grace and charm, recalling their common origin and background in St. Louis. The students who had expected an Eliotic sortie into waste lands, where Alph the Sacred river no longer ran, and where streams of consciousness eddied between arid banks of disenchantment, were somewhat disappointed with a thoughtful and scholarly but not particularly exciting discourse on the influence of the Bible on English literature. After the lecture there was a symposium at More's house. Our host persuaded Eliot to read from his poems, and Sweeney and the Nightingales had their inning. I recall challenging Eliot's preference of Dryden to Shelley as a lyric poet and his calling meaningless and vague the lines in *The Skylark*—

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear.

I admitted that they might be meaningless to one accustomed

to breakfast at ten in a London fog, but insisted that if he had slept out in the open on a high ridge of the Cascades, as I had many a time, and watched the stars fade out in the dawn until only the morning star showed silver (not golden), he would at least admit an intelligible reference to an actual or a possible experience, which is the test of meaningful words. Eliot good-naturedly parried my charge by reminding me that two well known Shelleyans in the Literary Supplement of the *London Times*, in coming to the defense of their poet against his attack, had engaged in a wordy battle as to the meaning of "silver sphere," one contending that it was the moon and the other, the morning star. Under cover of this barrage he made good his retreat.

But Eliot's reading of his own poetry that night in Paul More's study was a rare experience.

II. One Impulse From a Vernal Wood.

More was very much interested in the efforts of a group of younger men in the Princeton faculty to counteract the prevalent tendency toward excessive specialization and departmentalization, particularly in the fields of Philosophy and Literature, ancient and modern. Believing that this was one of the bad effects of the influence of German universities on American scholarship, he championed the Oxford tradition against this type of Teutonization. At Princeton the establishment of the Division of the Humanities, paralleling similar movements at other universities, was largely due to the initiative of a group of younger scholars who had been stimulated by his lectures, books, and conversation. In his later years he was in the habit of meeting informally with this group over a cup of tea or coffee at "The Balt," and came to prefer these gatherings to the more formal luncheons at the Nassau Club at which he had earlier been a regular attendant and occasional speaker.

I remember calling on him one evening in the early spring at his home on Battle Road, after one of these conferences "over

the coffee cups." He spoke of his enjoyment of the walk back through the town, the loveliness of the Drumthwacket woodlands and greensward, the placid pond with the little Greek temple on its margin, brought by Mr. Pyne from Italy, the swans ruffling its surface, and the beauty of the sunset he had faced "stepping westward." I said, "You almost persuade me that you shared Wordsworth's "impulse from a vernal wood."

He smiled and answered, "I think I shall have to retract some of the harsh things I have said about Wordsworth, if the Lord spares me."

When I learned, a year or so later, that he had made a remarkable recovery from a serious operation, I said to a friend, "The Lord has spared him for a special purpose." He was much amused when this was reported to him. It would be interesting to learn whether among his papers there are any notes indicating such a reappraisal.¹ In his essay on Byron (1905) there is a premonition of his willingness "to recant some of the harsh things" he said about Wordsworth, some of the harshest in this very essay. "Let us by all means retain as a precious and late-won possession *This sense of communion with the fair outlying world* (note the "outlying" with its implied Platonic *double entendre*), but let us at the same time beware of loosening our grip on realities." Realities! The full implication of the word as here used is caught only by those who remember that at heart More was a Platonist to whom the fair outlying world of the senses "is seen to be but a shadow, and obscuration of something vastly greater, hidden in the secret places of the heart."

His quarrel with the Romantic poets was that they substituted minute observation for breadth of natural description. "You will find in Byron no poems on the small celandine or the daisy, or the cuckoo, or the nightingale, or the West Wind. But you may find pictures of mountains reared like the palaces of nature, of the free bounding ocean, of tempest on sea and storm among

¹Mr. A. H. Dakin, who is preparing More's biography, writes me: "Your surmise about Wordsworth is correct. In his later years Mr. More 'relented' considerably, as evidenced in one of his letters to Professor Robert Shafer."

the Alps, of the solitary pine woods, of placid Lake Leman, of all the greater, sublimer aspects of nature such as can hardly be paralleled elsewhere in English Literature." Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* is surely not narrow, cribbed, confined observation of trivial minutiae, and in his *Prometheus* you may find, as in *Manfred*, mountains "reared like the palaces of nature." More frankly admits that he has used Shelley's faults as man and poet as a foil to throw into relief the nature of Byron's genius, and in my conversations with him in his later days, I sometimes thought he would be willing to make, with regard to Wordsworth and Shelley, the frank avowal for which he gives Byron in the *English Bards* credit: "the ruinous criticism of Wordsworth, 'that mild apostate from poetic rule,' is the expression of an irresistible mental impulse. When the poet came to reflect on his satire he wisely added the comment 'unjust'."

III. Proud Humility: Humanism and Science.

Commenting one day on his praise of the Christian virtue of humility in a recent essay, I said: "I have never known a man so proud of his humility as you." But when I ventured to hold a brief for the humility of the scientist, who tests every theory by experiment, curbs speculation by observation, and distrusting his unaided senses, checks their report by instruments of precision, and does not consider it beneath his human dignity to note and record the minutest detail and verifiable fact in the "out-lying" world of nature, he quoted the passage from the *Phaedrus* where Socrates says, "The men who dwell in the cities are my teachers, and not the trees or the country." I replied, "I know you believe 'the proper study of mankind is man,' but does that make the study of nature by mankind *improper*?" He retorted with emphasis, "It is improper when it degrades man, ignores human experience in its concentration on experiment, produces a scientific $\psi\beta\varphi\iota\varsigma$ hostile to the spirit of humanism, and subordinates the study of the humanities to a one-sided scientific nat-

uralism in our programmes of higher education. *Homo sapiens* is superior to *Natura naturans!*"

His championship of the classical spirit characterized by "preponderance of human interest" sometimes led him to extravagant statements like the following: "We are all familiar with the travestied nature cult that is sapping the vitals of literature today. . . . The present generation must for originality examine the fields with a botanist's lens, while the poor reader, who retains any use of his intellect, is too often reminded of the poet Gray's shrewd witticism, that he learned botany to save himself the labor of thinking." Some of us, without quoting Thomas Gray, to demolish Asa Gray, may consider the progress of poesy more important than the progress of botany. Perhaps a knowledge of "How Plants Grow" will even help us to understand better how poems grow. Tennyson's *Flower in the crannied wall* may not be a great poem, but in the crannied wall of his Victorian mind blossomed the *Crossing of the Bar* like a fringed gentian in late October woods.

More's contemptuous attitude toward the scientific spirit was tempered during his residence in Princeton by his contact with men like Professor Scott, the geologist, Professor Henry Norris Russell, the astronomer, and the Compton brothers, who were pursuing graduate studies at Princeton—all of them scientists whose reverence for the truths of religion was not destroyed by their loyalty to the facts of science and who, like his own brother Louis Trenchard More (Vanuxem lecturer in Princeton, 1925, and author of the *Limitations of Science*), never ignored humanistic values in their scientific pursuits.

Like those of his brother, his shafts were aimed at the metaphysical deductions of the mechanistic Darwinists. I recall that at the first of Louis More's Princeton lectures on the *Dogma of Evolution* the biologists were all there in the front row, but at the concluding lecture of the series those seats were occupied by the professors and students of the Theological Seminary, who crowded up at the close to have the lecturer autograph his attack on the Darwinians, just off the press.

The defense by More and his fellow humanists of the "Classical Spirit" was indirectly supported by the vogue of Jeans and Edington, which seemed to provide a way of escape from the crude determinism of the mechanistic Darwinians, and by rarefying matter into energy, made it less contemptible. As between protons and genes, More preferred protons. I often wondered why in the conflict between Science and Humanism he did not recognize the significance of Goethe, the scientist who discovered the maxillary bone, and in his *Metamorphosis of Plants* anticipated the doctrine (adaptation of structure of function) underlying the evolutionary hypothesis in its Lamarckian form, the Humanist who matured from the romanticism of *Werther*, *Götz* and the first part of *Faust* into the classicism of the *Italienische Reise* and *Iphigenie*, and turned from the influence of Shakespeare, predominate in his youth, to Homer, Sophocles and the Greeks for inspiration and models. The only one of the group of crusaders advancing the banner of the new humanism under the leadership of More and Babbitt who does justice to Goethe as an ally is Professor Foerster.

I remember on one occasion when he had entered the lists for Theology against Biology, quoting to him a remark of my father's, a very human evangelical divine, apropos of the conflict between Genesis and Geology, which troubled my generation: "The Bible is God's revelation of himself in His Word. Nature is God's revelation of Himself in His Work. Theology is man's interpretation of His Word. Natural Science is man's interpretation of His Work. If there is a conflict between Theology and Science the trouble is with man's interpretation and not with God's revelation."

IV. Kantian Encounters.

Discussing Kant one day, I ventured to remark: "Your friend Babbitt objects to Kant because he had a picture of Rousseau hanging in his study and was tainted with romantic subjectivity; you object to him because his categorical imperative is empty,

harsh, and inhuman in its abstract universality. So you get him coming and going."

"Yes, going!" he retorted.

The truth is that More's deep interest in the Cambridge Platonists, his profound study of the Greek Church fathers, his familiarity with the Anglo-Catholic Theologians, and his own approximation to their position in his later years, were responsible for his antipathy to German Protestantism, especially in its post-Kantian development. The position of the Confessional Lutheran Church was alien to the bent of his mind, and his occasional references to it reflect his prepossessions rather than his erudition. On another occasion I called his attention to his definition of the Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist in the "Catholic Faith," as "consubstantiation," and assured him that this was a definition not accepted by the authoritative interpreters of Lutheran doctrine. I brought him a copy of Dr. Charles P. Krauth's *Conservative Reformation* and marked the passage expounding the Lutheran doctrine. When I called a few weeks later, he thanked me for my interest, but said he had not had time to look into it, and asked me to return the book.

I often had occasion to remark that the animus that occasionally appeared in his writing, when he was stirred by deep conviction, never was shown in his conversation, where he was uniformly courteous, considerate, and when condescending, justifiably so, but disarmingly good-natured always.

In spite of his impatience with Kant's categorical imperative, his haughty disdain of Kant did not crystallize into hatred of Kantians. He could hate the sin and forgive the sinner—as in his treatment of Byron—and indeed had more patience with intelligent sinners than with innocent fools, whom he could not bear easily. But he lacked the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* of the good Dr. McCosh, who, on a train one day startled his wife by pointing to a fellow traveller and exclaiming, "Isabella, I hate that man; he's a Hegelian."

One of his close friends in the early Princeton days was the distinguished Scottish Kantian editor and commentator Kemp-

Smith, Stuart Professor of Philosophy at Princeton, and now Professor at the University of Edinburgh. I recall that in 1930 when I visited Kemp-Smith in Chipping-Camden while he was spending the summer among the Cotswolds, much of our talk was of our mutual friend Paul More, with whom Kemp-Smith had been in recent correspondence. I gathered that the Scottish philosopher, with all his respect for More's dialectical acumen, and for his sourceful and resourceful command of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, nevertheless felt that More's progress from the skeptical approach to Religion to the Catholic Faith involved a partial abandonment of the rigorous and exacting demands of logic under the pressure of more deeply felt religious needs and of the realities of spiritual experience. It would be interesting to learn whether the letters that passed between the two confirm this casual impression gained during delightful strolls among the Cotswold hills.

V. Humor and the New Deal. Nietzsche and the Teutonic Heresy.

Those who know Paul Elmer More only as the erudite expounder of Platonism, or as the versatile author of the *Shelburne Essays*, in which the *censor morum* always walks before the *arbiter elegantiarum* in matters literary, little suspect the fountains of mirth (hidden beneath the severe exterior) which would bubble up in the company of congenial friends, when he was not expected to pontificate before groups of eager young acolytes ready *jurare in verba magistri*.

I remember an evening when he regaled us by reading clippings from a newspaper that ridiculed some of the more ludicrous absurdities of "The New Deal;" he joined heartily in our uproarious laughter.

Only a few evenings before, I had heard him deliver a lecture at Clio Hall on Nietzsche, in which he mercilessly and unsmilingly exposed the fundamental inhumanity of the Nietzschean "Will to Power" and the glorification of the Super-Man, de-

nouncing it as a Teutonic heresy that threatened the foundations of European civilization by trampling the Rule of Reason under the heels of brute force. More was critical of the vague and "expansive" humanitarianism of the New Deal, not because he was insensitive to the plight of the impoverished or blind to the struggles of the under-privileged, but because he was suspicious of a democracy of the Heart that repudiated the aristocracy of the Intellect and while remembering the forgotten man, forgot the memorable man.

VI. Shakespeare and Music.

As chairman of the Committee on Public Lectures, I gave a dinner for Schoenberg, the modernist composer, who was lecturing at Princeton, and invited Paul More and Professor Einstein as fellow musicians, remembering More's devotion to the flute and Einstein's to the violin. Was Eliot thinking of his friend when he wrote,

The broad backed figure dressed in blue and green
Enchanted the May time with an antique flute ?

I remember Einstein, who delighted in Mozart, whispering on the sly at the dinner table, "S. avoids music on principle (*Der mensch geht der musik systematisch aus dem weg*);” and I recalled that other line in *Ash Wednesday*—

Here are the years that walk between, bearing
Away the fiddles and the flutes.

In the course of the evening the talk drifted to Shakespeare and music. I had remarked: "Shakespeare's ghosts bring no authentic tidings of invisible things, but return to earth to torture the conscience of those who have done things they ought not to have done, or to whet the blunted purpose of those who have left undone things they ought to have done. There is no health in them. They are earth-bound voices of remorse and revenge."

More countered: "Shakespeare's German commentators have

read into him their own metaphysical and ethical abstractions. Shakespeare had no profound or unified view (*theory* in the Platonic sense) of the immutable laws governing human life and conduct, like Sophocles, Dante, or Milton. But his power to word every slightest shade of human thought or emotion and his superb command of the music of English speech explain and justify his unfading influence."

I asked: "Would you say then that Shakespeare's genius was more musical than philosophical, that as artist he was more akin to the great musical composers than to the great architects of the intellect?"

He replied: "Yes, and to the great masters of painting.

This my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine
Making the green one red.

What a splash of color! His color as well as his music is the touch that makes him kin to the whole world of Romantic Art. Form and motion of form are clearly defined, intelligible, classic. Color is illusive, impressionistic. The Greeks were preeminent in their imitation of form. The Renaissance artists excelled in color."

More was no admirer of Whitman, whose expansiveness and naturalistic mysticism ran counter to all More's fixed criteria in Art and Religion, but I think he would have approved of this dictum of Whitman's, so surprising to those who think of Whitman only as an anti-classical revolutionary, formless and void, shouting his barbaric yawps over the roofs of the world:

As pictor and dramatist of the passions at their stormiest,
though ranking high, Shakespeare, spanning the arch wide
enough, is equaled by several and excelled by the best old
Greeks (as Aeschylus).

And this, in a note on British Literature:

At its best the sombre pervades it and expresses in characters and plots those qualities in an unrivalled manner. Yet

not as the black thunder storms and in great normal crashing passions of the Greek dramatists, clearing the air, refreshing afterward, bracing with power; but as in Hamlet, moping, sick, uncertain, and leaving ever after a secret taste for the blues, the morbid fascination, the luxury of woe.

More did me the honor to attend a public lecture that I had the hardihood to give at Princeton on "Whitman and the Democratic Spirit." Lowell speaks somewhere of the expressions of "foregone dissent" that greeted Emerson's Divinity-School address. To many of my audience Emerson was to Whitman as Hyperion to a Satyr, and the only parallel I can claim between my poor efforts and Emerson's Apollonian shafts was my success in evoking those expressions of foregone dissent (*quorum maxima pars fuit More*), mingled with looks of puzzled tolerance and virtuous disapproval. In any case, More never referred to my lecture, and I knew that his silence spelled dissent, and that until I could persuade him to reinstate Wordsworth in his poetic Pantheon, Whitman was taboo.

VII. Hamlet and The Gospels.

I remember vividly a conversation on the train to Princeton, where we met by chance after I had seen a matinée performance of Hamlet by John Barrymore. I remarked that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, in contrast to Horatio, were striking examples of college students, in whom every idiosyncratic wrinkle of the brain had been ironed out into a conventional crease, so "true to type" that calling them Rosenstern and Guildencrantz would have made little difference. I then spoke of Barrymore's fine rendering of Hamlet's soliloquies.

Suddenly he turned to me—I still hear the deep music of his voice—and said; "Where in all Shakespeare will you find words like these, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'?"

"Princeton Junction," called out the conductor, and we cut short our excursion into the world of realities to make our connection for Princeton.

VIII. The Last Phase.

The last phase of More's progress from "Nature to Eternity," with his definite turn to the Catholic Faith, has much more than a mere biographical or personal interest, because it was symptomatic of a deep current setting in many quarters with increasing volume toward a reaffirmation of the spiritual values threatened by the trends of modern civilization and drawing together men of various faiths, or none, in a common re-examination of the historic foundations of Christianity. More's studies in Platonism and the Greek tradition had eminently qualified him to evaluate the contributions of Greek thought to Western Christianity, and had predisposed him to accept the forms in which the "Catholic Church" had embodied this tradition. But it was not until his last years that the *credendum est* of these scholarly studies was supplemented by the full *credo* of the believer.

My association with More was closest in these later years, and though I was never one of the intimate group that gathered in his home in complete unity of heart and mind, I can testify to the profound influence that his example and conversation had on some of the finest spirits in Princeton, especially among his younger associates.

There is a sentence in his essay on Byron (1905) which furnishes a striking clue to the direction his thought was taking even then. Commenting on the close of *Manfred* he speaks of the "solitary pride and isolation, *from whose oppression we long for deliverance*." In describing the rise of the modern spirit, he had written: "The World, after manifold struggles, had begun to throw off the medieval ideals. Faith in the infinite and eternal value of the human person, with all its earthly desires and ambitions, with its responsibility to a jealous God, had been rudely shaken"—then follows this revealing statement—"nor had that deeper faith taken hold of the mind wherein this laboring, grasping earthly self is seen to be but a shadow, an obscuration of something vastly greater hidden in the secret places of the heart."

IX. Last Visits.

Most vivid of all in my memory are the brief visits I was privileged to make during More's last illness. He was no longer able to receive his friends in his study, surrounded by his books, but lay stretched on a couch in an upper room of his home on Battle Road. We no longer discussed theological or philosophical subjects as in earlier days. His mind was as alert as ever, but I instinctively felt that the time for such encounters had passed. One does not discuss points of pilotage and choice of courses with the captain of a homeward bounder who has brought his ship to port on his last voyage, and found safe anchorage and firm holding ground in a harbor he knows. He was interested in the news I brought him of the town and the campus, and especially in the doings of his younger friends and students in the University. In the mellow light of the westering sun—the evening hour was reserved for his friends—his classic features were a rare study: the marble white of his noble brow, the strong aquiline nose, the firmly chiselled mouth with lips relaxing into a momentary friendly smile—all breathed a serenity of spirit and tranquil repose of mind that no marks of physical suffering could efface, like the sunset glow on a snowy peak, veiling the glacier-scars and bringing into sharp relief its purity of line and affinity to light.

As I write these lines, there comes to mind a passage in Whitman's prose on Emerson's death that seems peculiarly appropriate to Paul More:

We stand by Emerson's new made grave without sadness, indeed with a solemn joy and faith. So used are we to suppose a hero's death can only come from out of battle or storm or amid dramatic incidents and danger that few even of those who most sympathetically mourn Emerson's late departure will fully realize the ripened grandeur of his passing, with its play of calm and fitness, like evening light on the sea.

by Jane Mayhall

AUNT JULIA

LOOKING into the old picture albums, into the pale anemic faces waiting shadowy and spiritless upon the page, it is difficult to distinguish the qualities of character hidden there; neither strong line nor conflict show above that vapid harmony of an ambiguous past. And so the page is carelessly turned. The transparent smile, the rare and interesting fashion of cape or hat, the landscape which appears in the background, strange and imperfect like a double-exposure—all of the well-intentioned pose has vanished into only an approximate likeness, into an elemental half-light. It is as if we and Time were composed of a vaster and less perceptible substance, that of *inevitability*. And faintly, like a fume of yellow lamplight spreading thinly upon a dark surface, does the reflection of a man, a woman, a family, hold countenance to us—a poor representation of themselves within that distorted memory of photograph.

But it would not have seemed so in the youth of my Aunt Julia and Uncle Michael. From what I have heard of their marriage and the unforeseen conflict which made siege upon their lives, nothing seemed inevitable. Everything that formed the pose, the faintly turned foot, the clenched hand, the frowning eye-lid—all seemed fraught with passionate intention.

My Aunt Julia, as I see her in photograph now, was a serious bright-eyed little woman. That is, she was bright in one eye; the other was stone-blind. This was the result of some unexplainable accident which had occurred when she was a child. In early years she had fallen on a pair of tiny doll-scissors and had injured the orb in such a way that blindness resulted not long after. In spite of the one blind eye, Aunt Julia had retained her kind of beauty. I call it her kind for her appearance was

not one that coincided with the standards of the time. Her small face was too sharply defined, the lips too thin and the whole hue of her skin was too dark to be fashionable. When all of the other females of that decade were soaking their pale necks and bosoms in buttermilk in an effort to attain an even more snowy and respectable surface, Aunt Julia was going thoughtlessly about with her swarthy exterior uncovered. Had other more proper ladies been afflicted by such a fate, they would certainly have worn high collars, long gloves. But Julia did not. And even more shocking than her lack of interest in feminine detail was the singular pleasure which she took in ascribing the strange color of her skin to some secret heritage, a strain of *mulatto* blood picked up in New Orleans by some wayward ancestor. This, to the horror of our poor but esteemed Kentucky family, was not entirely improbable and there was much consternation in the ranks whenever Julia had opportunity to mention the deplorable affair.

Aunt Julia did not mind the family. There was a wealth of individual strength in her. The difference could be seen in pictures of her as a young girl. In contrast to the other females who were generally grouped into elaborate poses, their corseted figures tilted at odd angles, the long swan-like necks rising out of their bared shoulders and bent to an excruciating degree of flirtatious amiability, in contrast to this, Aunt Julia remained alone, standing straight and stalwart, the ostrich feather in her large hat pointing heavenward.

However, Aunt Julia was not all eccentricity. In spite of the necessary separation from others (the infirmity of her eye and the individual spirit of her mind) she still, in her secret heart, shared silent membership in that unique feminine cult which desired above all things a marriage and successful wifehood.

And so while she was still young, Aunt Julia had caught herself a man. He was Michael MacDonald, a tall thin Irishman with a head too small for his long frame. Actually he was not much of a catch, but there was something attractive about him.

He dressed well, brushed his clothes and looked solemn in church. I remember Uncle Michael in his wedding picture. He wore a large swooping derby hat and a winged collar with a flashing pin to brighten the expansive cravat. He was a barber at the time and he said that the elaborate stylishness was for the benefit of his customers.

Aside from his clothes there was nothing particularly striking about Uncle Michael. He was a silent man, not very enterprising, and seemed to welcome the chance of marrying Julia, whose mind was full of myriad plans for the future. Had her life taken place at some later date she might have been a business executive or in some formidable position of official power where it would be unnecessary for her to express her will by such a devious route as matrimony.

But during their first days together the couple seemed normally happy. There was some financial difficulty after the first child. Either from the excitement of the event or just a state of inertia, Uncle Michael ceased to cut hair. Or when he did attempt a neck-trim, the customers would leave grumbling with badly chipped ears. But Julia, always alert to the battle, did not submit to a defeated husband. With the aid of a large galvanized iron tub she immediately embarked upon a career of fine laundering and wet-wash. The family was scandalized! But being none too financially secure themselves, they pursed their lips and remained silent.

These were Aunt Julia's "black days." Her lips became drawn, the dark skin more unbecomingly sallow, the thin collar bones jutted out. But there were always more and more children. By the time she had bought (with her laundry money) a stupendously large and barnlike edifice to house the increasing family and a new barber shop for Uncle Michael, there were three children and one more coming. I can see her in those blue-tinted photographs that make everything look like nightfall—I can see her posing awkwardly, the dark bluish face mysterious above her

skinny shoulders. And beneath all, the large billowing apron of pregnancy.

But it never failed that after an exhausting day among the scalding soaps, she would come blithely out in the twilight, call her neighbor next door and the two of them would soon be lost in a panorama of domestic fantasy.

"There is!" she would exclaim, "There is going to be a mantle-piece in our living room. No more coal-stoves for me!" and her one cheerful eye would sweep the horizon, searching for one crack of impracticability in her scheme. There was none. In no time at all a tin roof and a hot water heater were promised for the useless and mildewed basement area.

Meanwhile Uncle Michael had grown more deeply silent. He was, as people pointed out afterwards, rather unfitted for this world. He had no trade, no ambition, perhaps no hope. Whereas Aunt Julia's mien was one of continual effort and expectancy.

There was going to be a yard full of children; the day's washing waved in the wind like birds afight. There was hardly anything left for a man to do. But still, guided by a sense of sick fidelity, Uncle Michael opened a second barber shop.

The home of my aunt and uncle was a jolly place to me. I, being an only child, was glad to visit my Aunt Julia and riotous cousins. There was wild excitement in everything they did. The children were allowed complete freedom. The oldest one, in later years, took a trial spin on a stolen motorcycle and was killed. But this was an extreme case of their frivolity. Actually their greatest and most harmful vice was the amount and the kind of food they ate. Clean or dirty, raw or cooked, the whole lot of them consumed an alarming amount of the most dreadful kinds of penny candies, pickles, half-spoiled fruits, old used chewing-gum. They had all achieved some kind of serious illness before the age of six. This was marvelous to me. That ecstasy of unlimited freedom! My own life was set so solidly in cereals and milk and was it not incredible that others could dwell above all that, unrestrained and immoral!

It is clear now that Aunt Julia simply had no time for her children. Her wifely ambitions went beyond and exceeded maternal satisfaction. When they were ill or dying she mourned them. Undoubtedly she loved them deeply. But by this time she loved all things deeply. Her work, her husband, her home, the lady next door, perhaps even her one blind eye was dear to her. She radiated between the elements around her, she built upon and progressed by them. So it was not without emotion that she discovered that Uncle Michael had fallen in love with another woman.

Another woman! One might as well say another frog or another fence-post for all it meant. Because in some way or other Aunt Julia had never quite considered her own self a *woman*. From her pictures it could plainly be seen that she was outside that sort of thing. She was, to her own thinking, a spirit of femininity, as the flicking sparkle of a clean washpan might be the spirit of industrious labor. But as for being a *woman*—

But Uncle Michael had found himself a flesh and blood female. She was a passionately handsome widow named Isabella. Her lips were full, her cheeks flaming and she wore a red velvet dress which ceased low at the bosom and draped discreetly over the arms. Uncle Michael was swept away. Aunt Julia had only ruled and manipulated his clumsy will—but the widow! The widow moved him gently, washed over his conscience, laved his melancholy heart.

However, there were the children. They were a vital point. "What?" said Aunt Julia, one dark eye glowering, "What happens to the children?"

Uncle Michael shook his head bewildered. He was not enterprising.

"Love! Poof!" Aunt Julia tossed her apron. "This is no time to talk of love. Where is your practical sense, man?"

"But—" he made a last attempt, "I won't be happy here, Julia." His voice was quiet, his manner mild. Uncle Michael was a timid man. If he had left Aunt Julia, just disappeared in

the dead of night, he might have had a chance. But he could not foresee from the day into the night. And there was an unexplainable guilt in his heart. The last was his undoing. For, after five days of meek protest, he was persuaded into submission. Aunt Julia had him fast.

Afterwards Isabella came to the house just once. "Farewell," she whispered in her throaty voice, "Farewell Mickey!" She was leaving for California; in a pale red dress her skin was as white as marble. She was classic, her tears the epitome of grace, each dropping like a sculptured jewel. She and Uncle Michael talked for a half-hour in the parlor while Aunt Julia sat brazenly on the front porch in her house-dress, rocking and holding the third youngest in her lap. As she sat there she began to pat the child on the wrist with such continuous monotony that at last it cried out in a loud voice, "Mommy, Mommy, stop it!"

Aunt Julia looked at the child in surprise and started to speak. Then an expression of resolution passed over her face and she did not. She hardly ever spoke to her children. Her relationship to them was almost purely biological—providing them with food, drink, the elementary comforts.

In the later years, I remember Uncle Michael more clearly. He had given up his barber's position and had become a house plasterer. The salary was fairly decent but the family was large and he had to work hard for what he earned. I remember him when he came home at night. There he would be, all covered with white plaster, looking like a ghost. By this time all personal pride had been sluffed off. He would drop wearily into an easy-chair, close his white-stained eyelashes, sigh dismally and then reach for the magazine rack.

Cowboy stories were his favorite reading material but it was not allowed before dinner. For at that very moment Aunt Julia would come quickly out of the kitchen with that strange menacing walk, peculiar only to housewives, would stop abruptly in front of him and stand there, her accusing gaze leveled on the magazine which he held. With scraggly gray hair pinned up from

the kitchen heat, and the curious hollows of fatigue under her eyes, she was truly an apparition of terror. With a startled expression, Uncle Michael would spring up from the chair and quickly go off to the bathroom, leaving a thin trail of chalk dust behind him. Aunt Julia would follow rigidly after, broom in hand, brushing and muttering angrily to herself. He took it all. Her vindictiveness he never resented.

And long after, when they were both older and he was dying of cancer, he never fought back. Aunt Julia, her back as straight as a rod, would walk challengingly into the parlor, rub furiously at the mahogany table and then suddenly turn on him, the one eye searching him like a light.

"Michael MacDonald, are you chewing tobacco again?"

Tobacco was a special misdemeanor as it had been forbidden by the doctor. But something in his long frame forced him to continue. Was it an attempt to lose that last flicker of health? In such a state of mind as Uncle Michael's, one might almost foretell one's own end.

And then a strange thing happened.

When his illness had made him too weak to sit up, he was forced finally to take to his bed. And there he lay all day in a mass of chintz covers and pillows. At first it all seemed acceptable to him and in his old easy and amiable way he did not rebel against the new and difficult routine that illness had forced upon him. But suddenly, on a single day, the situation and all of its forthcoming consequences seemed to strike him—with a vast and incredible realization his eyes blinked wide, he sat up in bed and shouted for his wife!

She came to him, he reached out, blindly grasping her apron hem, shaking it with such profound agitation that she could hardly remain upright.

"Julia," he said, "Julia," and his voice was accented by the greatest emotion, "Don't let me die!"

Perhaps this was as unexpected to her as it was to him. She had been holding a bowl of flowers in her hands at the moment he

had called, and they had slipped from her fingers, crashing to the floor. It was a terrible shock to her. It was as if something else had entered the house, had come in by way of the shining French windows. She looked up and around the room, a feeling of surprise in her. Rubbing her hard scrawny knuckles together she stared at him as if in contemplation. He was dying, was as thin as paper. Even the slightest movement in the world, the opening of a door, a step on the rug, a sudden blow of sunlight, all trembled him as if he were already ash.

But here was a new challenge. His quaking hand, his fearful eye. In the second that he had spoken she was wavered, she was wounded by a terrible feeling of pity. Like a flood it threatened to break into words of sympathetic reassurance.

But instantly, with an instinctive hand for good order, she quelled the flood. For Aunt Julia, in Michael's ultimate crisis, did not resort to kindness or an easy show of compassion.

"Die!" she said, "Poof! What a fool you are! Nobody as mean as you could die in a million years, Michael MacDonald!" And she snatched up the mop and threshed it angrily about on the hardwood floor.

He watched her dumbfounded. And then a slow smile of apologetic relief crossed his face. Her lack of concern was, for him at that moment, eloquent. The bone and the flesh of her were of granite. The frowning eye-lid, the thin hardened body, these were the very bulwark of her soul. It was clever of her, almost beyond her capacities for cleverness. During this time Aunt Julia took to drinking much coffee and at night she was shaken by strange fits of trembling and heart palpitations. But she never seemed to lose her stern and impregnable manner. And for some reason Uncle Michael seemed to thrive, to grow happy and hopeful on this.

When we saw him toward the last, it was astonishing. Michael was completely persuaded that he was going to live. His face grew radiant, his thin feathery hands were reaching toward a substantial reality. Life had grown intensely sweet to him. The

brusque way in which Aunt Julia cleaned the room, the friendly sunlight on the sill, all were integrated into a precious and undeniable everlastingness. Aunt Julia had claimed him in her own world.

Uncle Michael died in her world, in her arms. Feeling the pangs of death, he looked up at her startled. She bent her stern face, the one bright serious eye and reproved him, reassured him so that even in the last torment, the illusion remained that nothing had changed. And when he was dead, she laid him back on his pillow and called us in.

We had scarcely surrounded the bed when she was seized by an incredible contortion of grief, and catching hold of my hand, for I was the oldest nephew, she gripped it tightly. In a fierce whisper like the hiss of foam above the groaning waves beneath, she cried, "What a brave man, what a brave man he was!"

And we stood in the sunlit room with awkward faces staring, like a hasty portrait of a family gathering at which nobody was welcome but everyone had to come.

by William Van O'Connor

TENSION AND STRUCTURE OF POETRY

TENSION distinguishes poetry from prose. It implies a use of language which serves, within limits, to keep the poet from falling into sentimentalities, irrelevancies, exaggerations, unqualified didacticisms, formlessness, vagueness, incoherencies, and so forth. In the succeeding summary I have added my own list to the elements which Robert Penn Warren judges necessary to poetic structure:

- 1) "tension between rhythm of the poem and the rhythm of speech"
- 2) "between formality of the rhythm and the informality of language"
- 3) "between the particular and the general, the concrete and the abstract"
- 4) "between the elements of even the simplest metaphor"
- 5) "between the beautiful and the ugly"
- 6) "between ideas;" between specific "opposites" as in oxymoron or in paradox
- 7) "between the elements involved in irony"
- 8) "between prosims and poeticisms"
- 9) between an intensive image and the rest of the poem
- 10) between an extensive image and the parts of the poem
- 11) between the ambiguities and connotations of a word or line and the rest of the poem
- 12) between the meaning of one phrase or line and the meaning of the other phrases or lines in the poem
- 13) between the diverse meanings of a pun and the argument of the poem
- 14) between the rhyme, assonance, alliteration and the argument of the poem
- 15) between the argument, or tenor, and the diverse suggestions latent in the vehicle, or images.

- 16) between chains of evidence leading to different conclusions, as in metaphysical poems
- 17) between exaggerated statement, rhetoric, and direct, "objective" statements¹

Presumably, all of these poetic elements, and no doubt others, add up to Allen Tate's succinct pronouncement: "the meaning of poetry is its tension; the full organized body of all the extension and intension that we can find in it." If structural techniques are achieved at the pitch of passion then exquisite poetry may result. This will be the reward, as Henry James says of the artist, for the poet's infinite curiosity and incorrigible patience.

II

Reading through the poems of various periods, one discovers that not only individual poets write to exhibit predefined attitudes, begin with, rather than end with, simplicity of effect; but also that this is likewise a fallacy associated with literary periods. The critic's temptation is to hold up,—say, the Victorian era's sense-of-knowing or the Neo-classic era's philosophical solutions, and to show how characteristic poems lack tension because of their beginning with, rather than ending with, solutions. This is easily done. Perhaps it is more valuable, however, to take three poems from different periods which exemplify the way in which approach affects structure and, therefore, a poem's value. The necessity for adhering closely to a consciously poetic structure, the playing off of part against part, can be seen clearly in a consideration of lyric structure.

Students of the lyric have discovered that, generally speaking, the well-constructed lyric is divided into three parts. First, the poet gives the situation out of which the lyric is to grow; this is the emotional and intellectual stimulus. Secondly, as Erskine puts it, "the emotion is developed to its utmost capacity, until as it begins to flag the intellectual element reasserts itself." Thirdly, the poet takes advantage of the reader's aroused emo-

¹For Mr. Warren's discussion see "Pure and Impure Poetry," *The Kenyon Review*, Spring, 1943.

tion by associating in a structural way a resolution or an intellectual evaluation with it.

One of the most skillful of lyric writers is Robert Herrick. His *The Mad Maid's Song* exhibits a dramatic structure—the reconciliation of heartbreak and madness with a sane acceptance of death. In the first two verses (the stimulus) Herrick gives us the situation: the girl's lover is dead, and she is mad. Without specifically asking for our sympathy he wins it by references to the newborn day and the beauty of the living primrose—contrasts, of course, with the dead lover:

Good Morrow to the day so fair;
Good Morrow, sir, to you;
Good Morrow to mine own torn hair,
Bedabbled with the dew.

Good Morrow to the primrose too;
Good Morrow to each maid
That will with flowers the tomb bestrew
Wherein my love is laid.

Herrick employs ambiguity in the line "Good Morrow to mine own torn hair," suggesting excessive grief, but also madness. The further information, "Bedabbled with the dew," implies the wild nocturnal wanderings of the maid; yet the formality of her manner qualifies her madness. Verses 3, 4, 5, and 6 express the pathos inherent in the situation.

The wild grief of the girl is felt through her senseless suggestion for finding her dead lover. Toward the end of the poem her emotional debauch is tempered by her sane recognition of the fact—"though he be dead."

Ah, woe is me, woe, woe is me,
Alack and well-a-day!
For pity, sir, find out that bee
Which bore my love away.

I'll seek him in your bonnet brave;
I'll seek him in your eyes;
Nay, now I think they're made his grave
I' the bed of strawberries.

I'll seek him there; I know, ere this,
The cold, cold earth doth shake him;
But I will go, or send a kiss
By you, sir, to awake him.

Pray hurt him not; though he be dead
He knows well who do love him,
And who with green turfs rear his head,
And who do rudely move him.

Lastly, there is the resolution of the emotion. The girl, returned to the edge of sanity, continues to talk as though mad, but she does so as a transitional step back to a rational acceptance of her permanent loss:

He's soft and tender; pray take heed;
With band of cowslips bind him,
And bring him home. But 'tis decreed
That I shall never find him.

It is a commonplace of modern criticism that Shakespeare and poets of his day for the most part expertly fuse emotion and intellect; that the emotion assimilates the intellectual and is in turn assimilated by it. The emotion and intellectual attitude justify their union, however, only in terms of the just relationship of elements in the poem from which the over-all attitude of the poem rises.

We can observe in the following lyric of Wallace Stevens from the sequence *Peter Quince at the Clavier* that such a just relationship (or structure) is maintained. The increase of the emotion is effected by the clever use of poetic indirections, all of which converge upon, explain, and justify the final statement.

Beauty is momentary in the mind—
The fitful tracing of a portal;
But in the flesh it is immortal.

The body dies; the body's beauty lives.
So evenings die, in their green going,
A wave, interminably flowing.
So gardens die, their meek breath scenting
The cowl of Winter, done repenting.
So maidens die, to the auroral
Celebration of a maiden's choral.

Susanna's music touched the bawdy strings
Of those white elders; but, escaping,
Left only Death's ironic scraping.
Now, in its immortality, it plays
On the clear viol of her memory,
And makes a constant sacrament of praise.

The first four lines are a statement of the poet's theme. The following six lines are explorations in figurative language of the truth of his abstraction. The constant flux of delicately beautiful things is figuratively caught up in the deepening green cast of evening light. The light becomes associated with an interminably flowing wave—thereby extending the idea of flux. Then the poet takes up a new image, the garden, the sweet breath of which scents the cowl of winter, thereby giving the changes of season a kind of approbation. The cowl of winter is an excellent intensive image. All the sombreness and chill of the cloister, its suggestion of sequestered retreat, inhere in it. Another change of figure in the next two lines states indirectly that the beauty lost in death of maidens merely takes another form.

The final six lines are the exploration of a single metaphor, ending in the intellectual resolution of the poem. There is a series of symphonic changes implied in the music of Susanna touching the bawdy strings of the elders, rising to the shrill ironic scrapings of her death, and finally settling into a gentle paean of praise. Here there are sudden shifts, through association, of images (lines 6-10); sudden shifts in tone from "maiden's choral" to "bawdy strings"; the intensive image; the reordering of words in unexpected relationships, such as "green going;" ellipsis, such as "white elders;" the exploration of a single metaphor; and so forth. All are tools which shape the poetic structure and make the final statement just.

An examination of a sonnet chosen at random from Spenser's *Amoretti* will indicate the resultant failure when the basic structure of the lyric is ignored, and when there is an almost complete absence of the involutions of language and implications of figures which would serve to heighten the feeling and to qualify and il-

luminate the theme. In the first four lines Spenser presents the theme:

Oft when my spirit doth spred her bolder wings
In mind to mount up to the purest sky,
It down is weighd with thought of earthly things,
And clogd with burden of mortality:

In the next four lines the reader expects to find some exploration of the theme, but finds, instead, simply further statement:

Where, when that soverayne beauty it doth spy,
Resembling heavens glory in her light,
Drawne with sweet pleasures bayt, it back doth fly,
And unto heaven forgets her former flight.

In the well constructed lyric one would expect in the last lines to discover the intellectual resolution. Here, however, there is no dramatic emotional situation to be resolved. There is merely further explanation couched in terms of graceful tribute:

There my fraile fancy, fed with full delight,
Doth bath in blisse, and mantleth most at ease;
Ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
Her harts desire with most contentment please.
Hart need not wish none other happinesse,
But here on earth to have such hevens blisse.

The difference between the poems of Herrick and Stevens and Spenser is the distinction between the poetry of exploration and the poetry of exposition. Herrick and Stevens present material for the reader to *work* through; Spenser presents an imagined experience unequivocally stated. There is in the first two poems an intellectual and emotional problem to be settled in terms of the materials presented. Spenser, as a Christian, represents and illustrates a Christian attitude; he does not *re-experience* it. He does not *earn* his attitude. This generalization would seem to be in order: An opinion that is not expressed in terms of the context from which it stems, which is not qualified, that is, in terms of contrasts, discordant feelings and attitudes, which is

not, as Brooks puts it, "resolved through struggle," is not an opinion but a prejudice. Nor is a poem to be used to record a past experience: it presents an experience within itself. The ancient student fallacy—"We have a *right* to our opinion, don't we?"—is often the fallacy of the poet. He does not have a right to it unless he explores his materials openly, in the presence of his reader, who may—and indeed has to, if he would adequately understand—recreate the poem as he reads it.

A history of poetry might be written not only in terms of typical poems, such as we have selected here, but in terms of dominant commune or group attitudes. In so far as poems unequivocally accept an attitude of preciousity, a school (such as Imagism or Symbolism), a current emphasis (such as one of the many elements of romanticism), a political theory (such as the rights of empire), the poems will beg questions—will not justify their presented attitudes. The fallacy is characteristic of many periods, our own included.

III

Didacticism, the characteristic fault of much eighteenth and nineteenth century poetry, implies a thought-out, predefined conclusion to a poem, an evaluation which is an extension of the poetic materials and irrelevant to them. When poetry is deliberately didactic the imagination becomes the tool of a pre-determined attitude. Characters in drama then become figures of useful abstractions and images in poetry become mechanical and decorative. Eighteenth century and nineteenth century poems (particularly in America) frequently end with moral injunctions—and the poems "justify" themselves by their conclusion. Thus Collins ends the essentially poetic *Ode to the Passions* with

O bid our vain endeavors cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece.

Or Bryant characteristically writes in *To a Waterfowl*:

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

When images function, not through the suggestions latent within them and meanings to be reconciled with the argument or statement, but as illustrations of a consciously striven-for poetic mistiness or moralism, the images will be superimposed—and often mixed. In Lowell's *Commemoration Ode* the confusion of the images results from a confusion of rationalizing and preaching with what should be a simple reconciliation of poetic elements:

A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains older than the day.

Sunshine, stars, clay, and fountains are conglomerately set against each other and through some imagined quality expected to elevate the basically prosaic preaching. The elements do not converge. This is not to say, certainly, that diversified images cannot be used side by side. But when so used there must be points of similarity, of relationship to each other or to the central theme which justify their being brought together. Emily Dickinson, living in the same preacher-conscious New England, could in such a poem as *The Chariot* handle the theme mortality—a temptation to moralizing—and succeed in making all the images intensify and relate to the dominant metaphor.

The nineteenth century poet, in the very act of throwing over the doctrines of the eighteenth century, sometimes fell into rhetoric employed for didactic purposes. The result is a kind of poetry which indulges in sententiousness under the guise of imagination; and consequently employs images that are either standard verse clichés or images consciously employed to focus the waiting emotion in the reader.

Romantic elements in poetry, however, do not of necessity destroy tension. The opening verse of Hart Crane's *The Air Plant* shows the play of poetic imagination and the resultant tension:

This tuft that thrives on saline nothingness,
Inverted octopus with heavenward arms
Thrust parching from a palm-bole hard by the cove—
A bird almost—of almost bird alarms.

First, there is the metaphysical element, the thriving on nothingness; secondly, there is the thematic relationship of saline, octopus and cove; thirdly, there is the sudden shift from octopus to bird—but with the justification that the uplifted, poised-for-flight appearance of the air plant makes the transition a readily acceptable one. Similarly, that the succeeding verses are developed always in terms of the air plant itself (not merely using it as a rhetorical point of reference) makes the poem an instantaneous whole.

IV

Tension is also a matter of the relationship of line to line. An image or a conceit may be meaningless if wrenched from its context in the poem; so, too, may the individual line. If the lines or stanzas can be easily detached from the poetic structure, then the poet is using essentially a prose structure—a progression from point to point in description, in exposition, or in argumentation. Poetic structure implies variations upon a single theme so that the completed poem becomes an instantaneous whole. An illustration of this is Tennyson's familiar lyric *Break, Break, Break*. In his first verse Tennyson states his wish that he could utter the deep thoughts he has within himself. In the second verse he says nothing further about his deep thoughts; he simply notes that the sailor lad and the fisherman's boy and girl are at play. In the third verse he introduces ships and a memory of a beloved one who is dead. Then in the fourth stanza he reverts to the waves breaking against the crags and

to days of happiness that are gone. The second verse could be left out entirely, as well as the first two lines of the third verse. In Tennyson's mind, apparently, there is some connection between the fisherman's boy and his own nostalgia. Perhaps the reader can guess at a connection: he is not shown the connection. If the ships are symbolic of a movement through existence, the permanence of impersonal things in contrast to the impermanence of individuals, or whatever, the reader can hardly know. The poet's nostalgia is obvious enough, as is the sombreness of the sea; but these are commonly associated, and the poet has in no way distinguished his nostalgia or the specific way in which the sea induces it.

In Raleigh's *The Lie*, built on parallel clauses, the poet's anger is released in regularly ejaculated barbs. The varied refrains, regularly sharp, renew the reader's attention. It is a poetry of statement rather than imagery, but its tension never flags; the variations never detract from the total unity. "It is no mean achievement," as Bradbrook says, "to keep up for thirteen stanzas this unprogressive fury, like a racing motorboat cutting circles around a buoy."

Go, soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless arrant.
Fear not to touch the best;
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the court, it glows
And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the church, it shows
What's good, and doth no good:
If church and court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

.....
Tell wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness:
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

A contrast of Raleigh's technique with that of Wyatt proves that tension can be achieved by highly dissimilar methods. Wyatt frequently presents his image in the first four lines, as in this instance wherein he compares his state to the troubled ship, and then investigates the implications of the vehicle, the image. Each line catches or explains a new implication.

My galley charged with forgetfulness
Through sharp seas, in winter nights, doth pass
'Tween rock and rock; and eke my foe, alas,
That is my lord, steereth with cruelness;
And every oar a thought in readiness,
As though that death were light in such a case.
An endless wind doth tear the sail apace,
Of forced sighs and trusty fearfulness;
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,
Have done the wearied cords great hinderance;
Wreathed with error and with ignorance,
The stars be hid that led me to this pain;
Drowned is reason, that should be my comfort,
And I remain despairing of the port.

It is, of course, a conceptual image through which each abstract statement is played off against a concrete figure. There is tension between the connotation and denotation of "my lord." Essentially Wyatt's is a tension of phrase or line in relation to all other phrases or lines in the poem.

The tension between the rhythm of the free verse of Whitman and the ordinary rhythm of phrasing is slight; his rhythm, of course, is closer to conversational rhythm than to the rhythms of formal poetry.

The blab of the pave, tires of carts, sluff of
boot-soles, talk of the promenaders,
The heavy omnibus, the driver with his inter-
rogating thumb, the clank of the shod
horses on the granite floor,
The snow-sleighs, clinking, shouted jokes, pelts
of snow-balls,
The hurrahs for popular favorites, the fury of
rous'd mobs,
The flap of the curtain'd litter, a sick man
inside borne to the hospital, . . .

Flaccus^{*} discusses the aesthetic effects of these lines: it "is the organization of colors and masses that threaten to break loose. . . . Our attitude toward the characteristic is tensional and furnishes pleasure of this sort." It seems quite the opposite to me. The elements are loosely associated. There is little question of the parts breaking loose. They were never together. Whitman adds nothing to our experience; we work through no structure of resistances; we end at ease, just as we began. The choice of Whitman's verse to exhibit the tension that should exist between the form and order imposed through art and the shapeless materials he works with is a poor one. Flaccus comments that "Our attitude toward the characteristic [“characteristic” to Professor Flaccus means the ordinary “which contrast so sharply with the beautiful.”] is tensional. . . ." There is certainly a tension between the ugly and the beautiful—but it is the function of the poet to contrast them within his poem. To be merely in the presence of the characteristic, as in Whitman's poem or in daily intercourse with events, is not to experience a sense of opposites.

A reading of much of Tennyson, most of Poe, parts of the Rossettis, the bulk of William Morris, almost all of Arthur Symons, and much of the early Yeats would indicate a failure in tension for reasons comparable to the explanation of Swinburne's failure. Swinburne's use of an exclusive diction, composed solely of romantic elements, by its very nature precludes tension. And, as we have seen, a great deal of the contemporary poetry in the Whitman tradition,—that, for example, written by Sandburg, Masters, and, more recently, Paul Engle and Struthers Burt—fails in tension because of a loose association of poetic elements. Even writers as dissimilar as Jeffers and Frost fail for the same reason, Frost to a lesser degree.

V

Tension in metaphysics springs from the nature of metaphysics. In the realm of practical science certain chains of evidence lead

^{*}Louis W. Flaccus, *The Spirit and Substance of Art*, p. 243.

to one conclusion or to another. Probably a result of such an influence is the curious unlaid fallacy in our minds that "facts speak for themselves." The contradictions inherent in metaphysics are caught in such terms and phrases as "multiplicity unity" and Marlowe's "infinite riches in a little room." Justice Holmes' phrase "delusive exactness" struck a recent reviewer merely as "cryptic;" we live in a society that decries metaphysics.

In Donne, as Smith writes, there is "the metaphysical problem of the lovers who are two, and yet one; who are mortals, and yet have no fear; who are circumscribed beings and yet a universe." In order to "prove" that even though his lovers are separated they are united Donne used the famous—or notorious—image of the "stiff twin compasses." The metaphysical mind of necessity seeks expression of its felt complexities in the language of image.²

The *metaphysical conceit*, as distinguished from other conceits, such as the Baroque, is allied to the metaphysical substance of much of Donne's and Marvell's and Herbert's poetry. We may examine one from "A Nocturnal on St. Lucy's Day:"

But I am by her death (which word wrongs her)
Of the first Nothing, the elixir grown.

The parenthetical expression is, of course, an Elizabethan poetical cliché—I shall make thee immortal through my verse, etc., etc. "Of the first Nothing" gathers up an inexpressible emotion and gives it being by indirection. The conceit holds more than the irony of someone's being nothing: he is the Nothing that partakes of the first nothingness. And then, in extension, the seemingly violent contradiction, "the elixir grown." In him the darkness of nothing is cured in the sense that in his holding the profundity of nothingness in himself all other nothingness loses its absolute character.

The tension in such conceits is the consequence of the sharply unlike elements that make for a newer unity. Some of the

²For Smith's illustrations, see "On Metaphysical Poetry," *Determinations*, ed. by F. R. Leavis.

Baroque conceits, too, have tension, but usually it is not maintained for long after the initial startling effect. Others fail in tension at an opposite extreme. Crashaw's conceit from *The Weeper*,

Two walking baths, two weeping motions,
Portable and compendious oceans,

is deservedly notorious. The excesses are characteristic of much post-Elizabethan verse.

Had I a voice of steel to tune my song,
Were every verse as smoothly filed as glass,
And every member turned to a tongue,
And every tongue were made of sounding brass. . . .

These forced comparisons of Giles Fletcher's spring from the same decadence. The reader turns away from the forced unions. Johnson wrote that a successful comparison is like the intersection of two lines, noting always "that the comparison is better in proportion as the lines converge from greater distance." In Crashaw's and Fletcher's comparisons the elements are parallel lines, which never meet.

Such images are not sufficient unto themselves and therefore cannot become integral in their poems. An intensive image not only is a unity itself but in a measure gives rise to the poem's unity. In Donne's *The Canonization* there are a number of intensive images:

Call us what you will, we are made such by love;
Call her one, me another fly,
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find the Eagle and the Dove.
The Phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us; we two being one, are it.
So to one neutral thing both sexes fit,
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

This stanza of the poem, of course, turns on the paradox of lovers' being saints, therefore each image, if it is intensive, will feed this paradox. We may take the candle image for analysis:

the lovers must die to be canonized; the saint chooses death in preference to life—"at our own cost die;" the candle is neutral, sexless—as saints, presumably, must be. This image then is *intensive*. When it is joined to the pun on "to die" the central paradox is deepened.

The taper image, however, no longer serves when the poet turns to the sub-theme of the rebirth in love; hence he moves on to the Phoenix image. The word "die"—as Prescott, Brooks, and Tate have pointed out—was used by Elizabethan poets to mean "the consummation of the sexual act." This pun enriched a number of love poems, reenforcing, without explicitly stating, the theme of the poem. Donne takes the trite poetic symbol of the Phoenix, which rose from ashes into new life, and by associating it with the pun on "to die" gives it an added meaning which relates to the central meaning of the poem.

What I have been implying, of course, is that new unities need new conceits. Far from being decorative these images will be integral. To use an imperfect figure, the image is a kind of ganglion whose fibres stretch into the body of the poem. Ezra Pound has referred to an image as an intellectual and emotional complex presented "in an instant of time."

It is the presentation of such a "complex" instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art.

The term "complex" is appropriate if we consider the intensive image of complex in little: that is, the poem and the image bear a macrocosm-microcosm relationship. Such a complex is seen in Warren's image, "twin atolls on a shelf of shade," in the poem *Bearded Oaks*:

The oaks, how subtle and marine,
Bearded, and all the layered light
Above them swims; thus the scene,
Recessed, awaits the positive night.

So, waiting, we in the grass now lie
Beneath the languorous tread of light:
The grasses, kelp-like, satisfy
The nameless motions of the air.

Upon the floor of light, and time,
Unmurmuring, of polyp made,
We rest; we are, as light withdraws,
Twin atolls on a shelf of shade.

Ages to our construction went,
Dim architecture, hour by hour:
And violence, forgot now, lent
The present stillness all its power.

The storm of noon above us rolled,
Of light the fury, furious gold,
The long drag troubling us, the depth:
Dark is unrocking, unripling, still.

Passion and slaughter, ruth, decay
Descend, minutely whispering down,
Silted down swaying streams, to lay
Foundation for our voicelessness.

All our debate is voiceless here,
As all our rage, the rage of stone;
If hope is hopeless, then fearless fear,
And history is thus undone.

Our feet once wrought the hollow street
With echo when the lamps were dead
At windows, once our headlight glare
Disturbed the doe that, leaping, fled.

I do not love you less than now
The caged heart makes iron stroke,
Or less that all that light once gave
The graduate dark should now revoke.

We live in time so little time
And we learn all so painfully,
That we may spare this hour's term
To practice for eternity.

A reading of the poem discloses that the poet is attempting to create a sense of timelessness, of eternity. If his image is ap-

properite, its compressed meaning will relate to and enrich the rest of the poem.

One can almost wrest the poem's meaning from an analysis of this image: the coral, to the building of which slow ages have gone, rests quietly in the sea. Yet it is not a quiet of whose origins one is unaware. The coral that is stone quiet is a memorial to the life and violences that begot it. Throughout the poem one finds emphasis on this: the preternatural stillness is most intense because of the violences it contrasts with. Further, "the shelf of shade" is rich in suggestion; the word "shelf" gives the *feel* of a physical body, of something actual, tactile, while "shade" suggests the intangible, the eerie, the mysterious. Together the words afford an appropriate contrast: the reader's sense that eternity, of which he knows nothing, is both real and unreal, like Yeats' "artifice of eternity." The image may be seen, then, to relate intimately to the setting, mood, tone, theme, and other images in the poem.

VI

Tension implies the inclusion of all the related considerations the poet can discover. We have seen that denotation falsifies our understanding of a total experience. The diction of prose is necessary for recording and analyzing experience on one level; the diction of poetry is necessary on another level for the expression and fullest possible exploration of the total experience. In reading prose one is aware of the writer's compromising with the actual nature of the experience being discussed. Many thought-situations apparently come into the mind with explosiveness: the necessity for prose expression, the breaking down into a series of statements an experience that is not simple, belies the instantaneous quality of the thought-situation. Both prose and poetry compromise with the fullness, but poetry does so to a lesser degree. In expressing an isolated thought, one not threading its way through a tightly related context, there is a compromise—the implications, the suppositions, the contradictions, the ambiguities, the ironies beg for consideration. To pre-

vent his lines from being taken in isolation, the poet will not only play off element against element within his poem, as has been said earlier; he will also try to bring into focus on his theme as many related considerations as possible.

The term *inclusive principle* serves to focus these considerations: the poet will not write at a point on the periphery of his subject; he will not use his subject for tangential departures. He will have a structure, however complex, to which each poetic element is related. It will be a complex as rich as his mind can make it. Quite possibly the poem will be simple, but delusively simple in that it is not easily ridiculed or demolished by an ironic intelligence. Otherwise, as Morris Schappes has written of one poet, in his failure to "unify these disparities" the writer has become "subservient to every passing scene and impression."

A further consideration in regard to the inclusive principle is suggested by the frequent contrast between denotative and connotative meaning. This point may be illustrated by Emily Dickinson's *The Brain is Wider Than the Sky*:

The brain is wider than the sky,
For, put them side by side,
The one the other will include
With ease, and you beside.

.....

The brain is just the weight of God,
For, lift them, pound for pound,
And they will differ, if they do,
As syllable from sound.

The denotative meaning of the entire poem does violence to our understanding of natural law. Physically, of course, the brain is smaller than the sky; metaphysically, the sky is non-existent unless it is encompassed by the brain. Similarly, the line "The brain is just the weight of God" denotatively is sacrilegious; connotatively, it is the *beginning* of theology.

This usage of opposed principles in Miss Dickinson's poem may seem little more than a simple series of paradoxes. Yet

it stems from a fuller recognition of experience than do most statements, prose or poetry. It exhibits tension. How truly humanistic it is may be seen by analyzing it in terms of Professor H. J. Muller's recent recapitulation of the humanistic position:

But through "planned incongruity" and the principle of ambivalence or polarity, one may set platitudes in a richer context, restore the living truth in truism, at times even startle. One may locate the good in the bad and the bad in the good, and then make for better.

by Eunice Glenn

EMILY DICKINSON'S POETRY: A REVALUATION

THE circumstances in Emily Dickinson's life are perfect for the romanticist: a woman of conservative Puritan background, who is unusually sensitive, shrinks from contacts with the world, has a few adventures that result in unhappy and disappointing experiences with the opposite sex, and, because of her somewhat morbid and melancholy temperament, finds relief for her tortured spirit in writing verse. Such is the usual, oversimplified account of her—an account that has done much to damage her reputation as a poet. This is not to imply, of course, that to be classified as a romantic poet is necessarily damaging, or to deny that biographical data have thrown a great deal of light on the genesis of Emily Dickinson's poetry. But an overwhelming tendency to arrive at conclusions on the basis of biographical data alone is not only unjust to her, but is very nearly fatal to her poetry.

Just as fatal is romantic criticism, which is about the only kind that has been given to her work. Those who admire Emily Dickinson's poetry are often blinded by an enthusiasm which makes objective criticism impossible. Consuming interest in the mystery and glamor of her life is associated with ecstasy over her poetry. She is idealized by sentiment: there is a halo about her. Instead of finding the real Emily Dickinson in her poetry, many try to discover her in speculations about her life. And the unfortunate result is that there has been very little close study of the poetry itself.

Such romantic ideas about the poet and her work account for much of the existing prejudice against her. The prejudiced, nat-

urally, do not take the trouble really to read her poems; consequently, they are usually willing to dismiss this "Puritan maiden" and her "bulletins from Immortality" with a patronizing shrug of the shoulder and to consign her to those who they think comprise her true audience—female readers who find in her verses a reflection of themselves and their frustrated love. It is much easier to accept romantic criticism than it is to examine the poems firsthand. Emily Dickinson has been put in her place, the wrong place, and kept there.

It may not be important to "place" her or to attempt to classify her at all. But it is important that her poetry should be given an intelligent and thorough criticism that is free from prejudice, goes beyond surface generalizations, and possesses some esthetic insight. A few critics of our day have recognized her poetry for its special qualities and have suggested some definition of it. They have discovered that in it there is a striking similarity to the metaphysical poetry of the seventeenth century, to some of the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, her English contemporary, and to some English and American poetry of the twentieth century. Allen Tate, in the first essay¹ ever to distinguish Emily Dickinson from her contemporaries, has established an entirely new point of view concerning her. In his opinion *The Chariot* is one of the most perfect poems in the English language. R. P. Blackmur followed with *Emily Dickinson: Notes on Prejudice and Fact*,² which is detailed, first-hand criticism, and, like Mr. Tate's, invites more of its kind. These two essays and Yvor Winter's fine analyses in *Maulie's Curse* are the extent of the unprejudiced criticism of Emily Dickinson's work up to this time.

Besides a lack of objective criticism, another thing that has proved to be very damaging to her poetry is the habit of quoting fragments out of their context. This kind of heresy is, of course, unfair to most poems, but especially so to hers because of their

¹*Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas*, New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936.

²*The expense of Greatness*, (Arrow Editions), 1941.

special quality. The lover of a pious Emily Dickinson can easily extract from her poetry "beautiful" lines that will furnish him with justification. The worshipper of a frustrated Miss Dickinson can likewise find enough lines to supply his needs. But it is extremely doubtful that any one of her complete poems (except for four or five in which she has inconsistently lapsed into sentimentality) will after a close study give such results. A turn or a twist, whether by the manipulation of tone or other device, usually introduces a complexity of experience not limited to a simple attitude.

But the poems speak for themselves. What is the use of merely *saying* that Miss Dickinson possesses a vigor of mind that resists romantic treatment; that superb control of tone is one of her methods; that she makes free use of bold metaphor and paradox; that her poetry is characterized by a use of disparate materials and an exciting use of language? Or what is to be gained by picking out of her poems some of the more audacious metaphorical phrases like "quartz contentment" and "hour of lead," or some of her paradoxical phrases, such as "pale sustenance" or "reticent volcano"? They would be meaningless without the full context; the work of any artist who uses language strictly is not to be judged by its parts. For purposes of convenience in the analysis of a poem such features as metaphor, paradox, and disparate materials must be separated; *but they cannot be separated from the poems.*

The following analyses of a few of Miss Dickinson's poems do not pretend to be exhaustive. An essay of this length cannot exhaust the varied ramifications often inherent in every line if not every carefully chosen word of her finer work; but it does attempt to show what it is that makes them successful. It is perhaps best to select out of all of the poems, which vary so much in their complexity, a few of the simpler ones, and then proceed to the more difficult.

This poem is typical of those in which the elements are more easily separable:

EMANCIPATION

No rack can torture me.
My soul's at liberty.
Behind this mortal bone
There knits a bolder one

You cannot prick with saw,
Nor rend with scimitar.
Two bodies therefore be;
Bind one, and one will flee.

The eagle of his nest
No easier divest
And gain the sky
Than mayest thou,

Except thyself may be
Thine enemy:
Captivity is consciousness,
So's liberty.

The theme of this poem is conventional and no unexpected attitude toward the theme is taken; therefore, the interest which it has for the reader must be found elsewhere. What is there in the treatment that makes the poem successful in spite of its conventional theme and usual attitude? If the metaphor is looked at closely, the answer will probably be found there; for the poem is worked out largely by metaphor.

Richard Lovelace's *To Althea from Prison* is on precisely the same theme, although it is a very different kind of poem. It is flowing and rhythmical and carefully rhymed. Emily Dickinson's poem is tight, compressed, and careless in rhyme. But, from the viewpoint of structure, it is in the metaphor that the most striking difference is to be found. Lovelace, for the most part, uses easy and romantic comparisons. "Love with unconfined wings hovers within [his] Gates." He lies "tangled in her haire." The birds, he says "know no such Liberty." Nor do the "Fishes that tipple in the Deepe," "Inlarged Winds that curle the Flood," or "Angels alone that soar above" know such liberty.

Compare these with such sharp and forceful images as the

"rack," "mortal bone" that "knits," "prick with saw" and "rend with scimitar." The "rack" which "tortures" is used in a subtle way to suggest the persecution of early Christian martyrs. "Stone walls do not a prison make,/Nor iron bars a cage." Lovelace's "stone walls" and "iron bars" are precise, too; but they do not come with the surprise of the "rack" and the "scimitar." The "eagle," "nest," and "sky" in Emily Dickinson's poem are her only ordinary figures.

Other details in *Emancipation* contribute to its success. The paradox implied in "two bodies" gives a shock since, apparently, the meaning is that one of the bodies is the soul, tying in with "There knits a bolder one" in the first stanza. The use of enjambment from the beginning of the third stanza to the end of the second line in the fourth stanza gives an impression of fluidity and speed. Finally, the paradox in the last two lines—a very common one—is expressed in a very uncommon way. "Captive is consciousness,/So's liberty" is typical of Emily Dickinson's succinct, epigrammatic statements.

Now that we have seen the way in which shocking metaphor is used largely to make a poem, let us turn to one whose effect is achieved mainly by control of tone (although it cannot be said too often that no one factor can be depended on to make the poem):

Title divine is mine
The Wife without
The Sign.
Acute degree
Conferred on me—
Empress of Calvary.
Royal all but the
Crown—
Betrothed, without the swoon
God gives us women
When two hold
Garnet to garnet,
Gold to gold—
Born—Bridalled—
Shrouded—

In a day
Tri-Victory—
“My Husband”
Women say
Stroking the melody.
Is this the way?

This poem is redeemed from being ordinary by the use of a few technical devices, chiefly paradox and the skillful control of tone. These are so merged that they cannot be easily separated, but must be for purposes of analysis.

The poem begins on a note of joyful victory. This note is continued into the second line with the words “The Wife;” but in “without the Sign” there is a quick sinking into a mood of dejection. Taken as a whole,

Title divine is mine
The Wife without
The Sign

carries a weight of mixed joy and despair and sets the tone for the entire poem.

The next two lines,

Acute degree
Conferred on me

are also a skillful blending of joy and despair. “Acute degree” is a paradox, “degree” suggesting honor or award and “acute” suggesting pain that is piercingly disagreeable. “Empress of Calvary” names the degree or title conferred and, as a metaphor, amplifies the preceding one. “Empress of Calvary” is, of course, an even more powerful paradox, uniting the symbols of sovereignty and crucifixion; it also ties in with “Title Divine.” A doubleness of tone is interwoven with the two paradoxes.

“Royal all but the/Crown” brings in a high tide of triumph. “All but” makes the “Crown” seem insignificant; but, standing alone in the line as it does, “crown” assumes some importance; and so the effect is mixed, not a feeling of pure triumph.

"Without the swoon" enriches the effect, since "swoon" introduces a faint feeling of displeasure to complicate the pleasure associated with a betrothal. "Garnet to garnet" and "Gold to gold" are brilliantly placed in conjunction, garnet being a hard, brittle and glasslike mineral of low brilliance and gold the most precious metal. The ceremony and the consummation of marriage are, of course, implied.

The lines,

Born—Bridalled—
Shrouded
In a day
Tri-Victory

may be said to synthesize the whole poem, developing its general paradox and sustaining the complexity of tone; "Shrouded" and "Victory" qualify with irony.

"Stroking the melody" is an exceedingly daring and imaginative figure. "Is this the way?" may seem to be ambiguous. Cleanth Brooks, admitting that the line is difficult, offers a possible meaning, saying that if "Is this the way?" refers to the "way" women "stroke the melody" or "pronounce the words," then, "the line introduces a note of ironic gayety, a bit of mockery, and gives a stronger conclusion than if interpreted otherwise." In this sense the line confirms the pathos that has been introduced earlier in the poem.

The feeling and thought that the poem, as a whole, engenders cannot be said in any way to be circumscribed within the limits of the subject. The implications are broad and the interpretation is applicable to many other situations than the one described.

Those familiar with John Donne's "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" are almost certain to be reminded of it by this poem of Emily Dickinson's:

He put the belt around my life—
I heard the buckle snap,
And turned away, imperial,
My lifetime folding up
Deliberate, as a duke would do

A kingdom's title-deed,—
Henceforth a dedicated sort,
A member of the cloud.

Yet not too far to come at call,
And do the little toils
That make the circuit of the rest,
And deal occasional smiles
To lives that stoop to notice mine
And kindly ask it in,—
Whose invitation, knew you not
For whom I must decline?

The "belt" is as precise a figure as Donne's "compass," although it is more sensuous and is not pursued so far; the ordinary associations with such everyday objects enhance their effectiveness when used in a fresh way. The belt is used in this poem, as the compass is in Donne's, to describe the relationship between two lovers. In saying "He put the belt around my life" the poet at once establishes an attitude which is not simple: added to the normally unpleasant feeling of being completely subjected to the will of another is an ecstatic delight in the experience. The complexity of tone continues throughout the poem. The dramatic quality is high. Each successive step, from putting on the belt and snapping it and turning "away, imperial, . . . as a duke would do" to the "decline" of the "invitation" of another (in the last line) is built up carefully. The conflict is resolved at the end, when it is made clear that no one else will be admitted into the circle.

The figure of the duke in the first stanza is rich in associations. After the buckle is snapped, he turns away, "imperial" (suggesting high command), her "lifetime folding up deliberate as a duke would do/A kingdom's title-deed" (an exact comparison, amplifying the principal figure). "Henceforth a dedicated sort,/ A member of the cloud" makes the state of the protagonist clear. There is paradox in it, since "dedicated" means being given up to something, and "cloud," whatever exactly is meant by it, has some suggestion of the opposite. "Cloud" may mean

high heaven or high authority; it may refer to a cloud of witnesses; regardless of which meaning the poet may have intended, however, the suggestion is the same.

In the last stanza the line, "To lives that notice mine," connotes a great deal about the humility and subjection of her state; but this is qualified by the "little toils," "occasional smiles," and, especially, by the decline of any other invitation. Paradox and complexity of tone, which characterize the poem, are both evident here.

The following is one of Emily Dickinson's finest poems:

IN VAIN

I cannot live with you,
It would be life,
And life is over there
Behind the shelf

The sexton keeps the key to,
Putting up
Our life, his porcelain,
Like a cup

Discarded of the housewife,
Quaint or broken;
A newer Sèvres pleases,
Old ones crack.

I could not die with you,
For one must wait
To shut the other's gaze down,—
You could not.

And I, could I stand by
And see you freeze,
Without my right of frost,
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise with you,
Because your face
Would put out Jesus,'
That new grace

Glow plain and foreign
On my homesick eye,
Except that you, than he
Shone closer by.

They'd judge us—how?
For you served Heaven, you know,
Or sought to;
I could not,

Because you saturated sight,
And I had no more eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise.

And were you lost, I would be,
Though my name
Rang loudest
On the heavenly fame.

And were you saved,
And I condemned to be
Where you were not,
That self were hell to me.

So we must keep apart,
You there, I here,
With just the door ajar
That oceans are,
And prayer,
And that pale sustenance,
Despair!

This poem, as a whole, bears an interesting comparison to Andrew Marvell's "The Definition of Love." That is not to say that a similarity of theme is sufficient basis for comparing one poem to another (far from it). But the respective methods of the two poets in handling the same theme, especially in attitude, suggest a comparison, as much for differences as for likenesses. In both, love resolves itself into a matter for despair because of the impossibility of fulfillment. There is however, a slight difference in the function of despair in the two poems. In Marvell's poem love springs out of despair: only "magnanimous despair" could produce "so divine a thing." In Emily Dickinson's poem love is consigned to despair, a "pale sustenance." The similarity lies rather in the unconventionality of attitude toward despair and love.

A more definite likeness is to be found in the metaphorical treatment of the idea of impossibility. With the figure of the two parallel lines Marvell shows how impossible it is for the two lovers ever to meet. Miss Dickinson achieves the same effect by the use of several bold figures. The first two lines of her poem, which are paradoxical (inasmuch as they imply that the protagonist is already dead, though alive), glide gracefully into the metaphor of the sexton (God) who keeps the key to "Our life, his porcelain,/like a cup." Implications concerning the Puritan view of life and sensual love are extremely ironical. The realistic attitude toward love is well sustained in the eight stanzas that follow. A dominant note of impossibility, like Marvell's, is sounded in the line, "I could not die with you." The three lines that follow convey a double meaning: first, that her lover is so fond of her that he could not be the one to close her eyes forever upon the world; second, that such an act would be a disfavor, since to her the world is too desirable a place to leave.

The next stanza is especially arresting: Love is so intense that it could not bear to see its object endure the coldness of death without being able to share it. The metaphor—"my right of frost,/Death's privilege"—accomplishes this effect; loving life, she does not really desire the "frost" of death, but paradoxically, she does desire it only for the sake of sharing something with her lover.

"Your face would put out Jesus'" comes with a particular shock. The figure is extended into the next three stanzas, where, paradoxically, she says that if he is lost and she saved, then she, too, will be lost; that if he is saved and she lost, then she will not be lost in any sense except separation. A "sordid excellence," as applied to Paradise, is another striking paradox. Whereas Marvell concludes with the faintly comforting thought that the love which "Fate so enviously debars" is the "conjunction of the mind," Emily Dickinson's poem ends on a note of hopelessness. "That pale sustenance,/Despair" (drawing one's very being from despair) is in its impact as forceful a line of poetry as can be found anywhere.

Thus, like Marvell's poem, *In Vain* is extremely complex in tone. There is emphasis on sensuality and also regard for discipline, which comes out in the references to orthodox religious conceptions, such as Heaven, prayer, Jesus, judgment, etc. But the sensibility of the poet and her reaction to the situation, as the poem shows, cannot be contained in the measuring cup of discipline.

But the poem of Emily Dickinson's which most effectively demonstrates the kind of technique that we have been considering is this:

THE CHARIOT

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor, and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played,
Their lessons scarcely done;
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries; but each
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

The central theme is the interpretation of mortal experience from the standpoint of immortality. A theme stemming from that is the defining of eternity as timelessness. The poet uses these abstractions—mortality, immortality, and eternity—in terms

of images. How successfully, then, do these images fulfill their intention, which is to unite in filling in the frame of the poem?

In the first two lines Death, personified as a carriage driver, stops for one who could not stop for him. The word "kindly" is particularly meaningful, for it instantly characterizes Death. This comes with surprise, too, since death is more often considered grim and terrible. The third and fourth lines explain the dramatic situation. Death has in the carriage another passenger, Immortality. Thus, in four compact lines the poet has not only introduced the principal characters metaphorically, but she has also characterized them in part; in addition, she has set the stage for the drama and started the drama moving. It may be noted, in passing, that the phrase, "And Immortality," standing alone, helps to emphasize the importance of the presence of the second passenger.

In the first line of the second stanza, "slowly drove" and "knew no haste" serve to amplify the idea of the kindness of the driver, as well as the intimacy which has already been suggested by "held just ourselves." In the fourth line, "For his civility" further characterizes the polite, kindly driver. The second, third and fourth lines tie in perfectly with the first two lines of the poem: she who has not been able to stop for Death is now so completely captivated by his personality that she has put away everything that had occupied her before his coming.

The third stanza contains a series of heterogeneous materials: children, gazing grain, setting sun. But under the poet's skillful treatment these materials, seemingly foreign to one another, are fused into a unit and reconciled. How? Not, obviously, by simply setting them side by side, but by making them all parts of a single order of perception. They are all perceived as elements in an experience from which the onlooker has withdrawn. In its larger meaning this experience is Nature, over which, with the aid of death, the individual triumphs. "Gazing grain," shifting "gazing" from the dead woman who is passing to a common feature of Nature at which she is astonished, gives the grain something of the fixity of death itself, although the grain is alive.

This paradox is highly significant in the context of the poem: "grain" symbolizes life, mortality; "gazing" suggests death, immortality. "Setting sun" is no less powerful in its suggestion of the passage of time; and "the school where children played,/ Their lessons scarcely done" makes a subtle preparation for it.

In the next stanza the house, appearing as a "swelling of the ground, the roof "scarcely visible" and the cornice, "but a mound," suggest the grave, a sinking out of sight. "Paused" calls to mind the attitude of the living toward the lowering of a coffin into the ground, as well as other associations with the occurrence of death.

"Centuries" in the last stanza refers, of course, to eternity. "Each feels shorter than the day" ties in with "setting sun" in the third stanza and suggests at the same time the timelessness of eternity. Indeed, an effective contrast between the time of mortality and the timelessness of eternity is made in the entire stanza.

"Horses' heads" is a concrete extension of the figure of the carriage, which is maintained throughout the poem. The carriage is headed toward eternity, where Death is taking the passenger. The attitude of withdrawl, or seeing with perspective, could not have been more effectively accomplished than it has been by the use of the slowly-moving carriage. Remoteness is fused with nearness, for the objects that are observed during the journey are made to appear close by. At the same time, a constant moving forward, with only one pause, carries weighty implications concerning time, death, eternity. The person in the carriage is viewing things that are near with the perspective of distance, given by the presence of Immortality.

The poem could hardly be said to convey an idea, as such, or a series of ideas; instead, it presents a situation in terms of human experience. The conflict between mortality and immortality is worked out through the agency of metaphor and tone. The resolution of the conflict lies in the implications concerning the meaning of eternity: not an endless stretch of time, but something fixed and timeless, which interprets and gives meaning to

mortal experience. Two seemingly contradictory concepts, mortality and immortality, are reconciled, because several seemingly contradictory elements which symbolize them are brought into reconciliation.

The interaction of elements within a poem to produce an effect of reconciliation in the poem as a whole, which we have observed in these analyses, is the outstanding characteristic of "Metaphysical" poetry. This poetry Cleanth Brooks defines⁸ as that in which "the opposition of the impulses which are united is extreme" or, again, that "in which the poet attempts the reconciliation of qualities which are opposite or discordant in the extreme." I have no intention of forcing this classification upon the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Indeed, I have no intention of forcing any classification upon her; I have tried to focus more upon the mechanics of her poetry. It seems fairly clear however, from the examination of a few of her typical poems that we have made that she is free from the limitations of the romantic poet, which she is generally mistaken to be. She does not employ metaphor only for illustration or decoration of some "truth," as the romantic poet usually does. She does not merely *introduce* an element of paradox, as the romantic poet tends to do; rather she succeeds in bringing it to the surface and in reconciling seemingly contradictory concepts. She does not use disparate materials sparingly and put them down in juxtaposition without blending them, as the romantic poet is often inclined to do. And her liberty in the use of words would hardly be sanctioned by the typically romantic poet, for fear of being "unpoetic" and not "great" and "beautiful."

The kind of unity, or reconciliation that we have been observing at work in these poems is chiefly responsible for their success. Proof of this is found in the fact that the few poems of Emily Dickinson's that are not successful show no evidence of the quality; and some others that are only partially successful show less of it. In this sense we are justified in referring to Emily Dickinson as a metaphysical poet.

⁸*Modern Poetry and the Tradition*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1939.

THE WHITE SPIRITUALS AND THEIR HISTORIAN

For the past ten years Dr. George Pullen Jackson of Vanderbilt University has been collecting, editing, and publishing the religious folk-songs of the United States. His first book, *White Spirituals of the Southern Uplands* (1933), is a great landmark in our new apprehension of native American culture. From the moment of its appearance it was no longer possible to maintain the contemptuous position taken by New York critics of the Nineteen-twenties, who argued that America in general, and the South in particular, were culturally barren, and, save only for the Negro spirituals and blues, especially barren of folk-song. Yet Dr. Jackson's first book, for all its importance, was of necessity an exploratory and tentative study. In it he set forth the historical background of the "spiritual songs," described their Southern milieu, and paid detailed attention to the "shape note" books, like the *Sacred Harp* and *Southern Harmony*, from which the materials of his study are derived.

Dr. Jackson's second book, *Spiritual Folk-songs of Early America* (1937), was a collection of two hundred and fifty tunes and texts. In this book Dr. Jackson began the work of relating the song-tunes to their possible originals and analogues. He also established the classifications that he has since followed: religious ballads, folk-hymns, and revival spirituals. In his excellent, though far too brief, introduction, he described the musical idiom of the white spiritual and developed his view that these songs, though existent in printed song-books and practiced by choral groups of varying degrees of sophistication, are genuine folk-songs. They derive from ancient sources, chiefly Celtic and English, and they are related to secular folk-song, but they have undergone a unique development in America, particularly in the South.

His third book, recently published, is *Down-East Spirituals and Others* (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1942. 296 pp. \$5.00). This is a collection of three hundred white spirituals like those of the previous book. The new collection is really a supplement to its

predecessor, and the two together offer a body of unified material. In extending his studies, however, Dr. Jackson has found that the spirituals are not limited to the South. They are to be found, or at least they once flourished, in what he calls "the deep North:" rural New England and New York. He is also inclined to believe that the advent of the "spiritual" in eighteenth century America must be related to contemporary and earlier movements in the British Isles. Again revising his earlier views, he is now able to argue that the Baptists, as a sect, may have been the chief progenitors and disseminators of the song-tradition that he has been studying. Baptist influence, he points out, antedates that of their great frontier rivals, the Methodists, and for various other reasons he believes that the Baptists were mainly responsible for setting the vogue and determining the type of the "spiritual songs." The discussion he gives this point, however, is rather slight. And out of the three hundred songs in *Down-East Spirituals*, only a third belong to New England. The rest are Southern or "Western."

Still another collection of spiritual songs is in preparation and will presently be published. This will deal conclusively with the problem, sketched briefly in Dr. Jackson's first book, of the relationship between the Negro spirituals and their white predecessors. That the white spirituals are predecessors of the Negro songs is already clearly indicated from the context of Dr. Jackson's studies. It is plain that the idiom and pattern of the Negro spiritual could not have been brought from Africa, no matter what sentimental claims to that effect may be made. Their derivation from the white spirituals is all too apparent, and they could have had no other origin. At the same time, they have diverged and gone on their own path, even when they have devotedly preserved many archaisms now lost from white musical tradition. The problem is to say what the nature of their divergence and development is.

When this book is published, we shall have before us in the several volumes a *corpus* of American religious folk-song which will be as complete as such collections can hope to be. It will

still lack—as Dr. Jackson frankly admits—whatever supplements might be made from oral sources, which he has not emphasized. Nevertheless, the old song-books alone are a sufficient, if not a completely definitive source, for, like English secular song collecting of the seventeenth century, they are very close to the oral tradition. The several hundred folk-tunes thus made available, and the large number—though not an equal number—of texts, will constitute a majestic collection. There will be nothing like it anywhere in the world.

It is hardly possible within brief limits either to appraise fairly Dr. Jackson's great accomplishment or to interpret adequately the tradition of song with which he deals. Only a little of the story can be set forth here. To George Pullen Jackson, without question, we must give the gratitude and respect that we owe to the great pioneers in the field of folk studies. In our country there is no other single accomplishment to compare with his unless it be Francis J. Child's monumental *English and Scottish Ballads*. Dr. Jackson's collections have the massiveness and finality of the greatest works. They have the further virtue of having disclosed a tradition of which the sophisticated and learned were so entirely ignorant that the sudden revelation of its existence, at their very doors, brings the shock of novelty. Not only are foolishly academic theorizings swept away; the possibilities of life and art are themselves fruitfully altered and quickened. The songs are not mere academic curiosities, to be abandoned to specialists. They are alive, and they can give us new life. Since this is true, Dr. Jackson's work is much more than that of the scholarly recorder. It is more lively and compulsive than Chappell's famous *Old English Popular Music* and similar antiquarian books. Dr. Jackson's contribution is somewhat like that of the great Danish scholar and teacher, Grundtvig, whose studies were an instrument in the revival of Danish community and national life. They may have precisely such a result for us if we understand and accept them as we should.

As for the songs themselves, and the tradition to which they belong, several extraordinary features appear, some of them

unparalleled, so far as I know, in the history of folk-song. We have a system of solmization—the fa-sol-la method—which seems to have survived in some mysterious way from Elizabethan England. To this has been added a characteristic American development, the “shape notes” or “patent notes,” an ingenious device intended to expedite the “lessons” of the singing school, in which institution, Dr. Jackson holds, the part-song tradition was originated and developed in its American form. Now, although singing schools have gone out of style, vestiges of their procedures remain in the all-day singings frequented by many thousand of devotees throughout the rural South. But the all-day singing is not a school. It is an occasion—not far removed from a feast or festival—in which song, religious devotion, and community spirit are indistinguishably merged. The rôle of the song-books becomes apparent. A ballad can pass from individual to individual and live for centuries through oral tradition. But part-song, as part-song, could never hope to survive thus. It requires the book with the printed parts, and this in turn implies the devoted choral group which will use the book and pass its devotion and its art from generation to generation by a conscious and deliberate fostering. The “Old Harp Singers” and various singing associations of the South, together with numerous small and more informal bands, constitute such choral groups. The continuity of the tradition that they preserve appears the more remarkable because it is not, at least in later times, institutionalized within the church. The churches, invaded by other influences, have drawn away from the old part-song tradition, and it stands separate from their authority and their support. The only possible parallel, I should suppose, would be the Welsh choral groups, but they are not a complete parallel.

With Dr. Jackson’s guidance, we see how this tradition of part-song has been affected by various fashions and modes, yet has never lost its essential character. The “fuguing songs” developed by the old New England composers have been a strong, continuous influence, which echoes, one is tempted to think, the great period of English part-song. As time goes on, however, the

musical structure of the fuguing songs becomes less complex and tends to consist in harmonized repetitions of phrases rather than in true polyphony. The great religious revival of the early nineteenth century also left its mark, but the "revival spirituals" remain clearly differentiated from "gospel hymns" of the Moody and Sankey type. And all along we can trace, even to the present day, what might be called schools of composers, who appropriated, adapted, originated, and arranged according to their own notions of what might be interesting and popular.

Considered as part-songs, the white spirituals are musical antiques, with characteristics that neither Dr. Jackson nor anyone else has satisfactorily explained. Their harmonic treatment sets them apart from the familiar four-part church hymns of our day, in which three of the voice-parts are subordinated to the air, and form its harmonic accompaniment. The spirituals of the old song-books are invariably given a polyphonic treatment by their arrangers, whether the air is adapted to such treatment or not. The several voice-parts often have considerable melodic interest of their own, although, where a fourth part has been added to songs originally written in three parts, the added part may be merely a drone, like the modern alto. The harmonization is archaic and unorthodox: consecutive fourths and fifths and other "forbidden" effects occur frequently. One cannot say whether this musical naïveté is due to the possible "musical illiteracy" of the arrangers, or is an unaccountable reversion to, or perhaps fidelity to, a lost tradition. In actual performance, the musical effect is not always pleasing to a modern ear, habituated as that ear is to the honeyed and orotund concords of prima donnas and crooners. It is austere and virile, however, and, as the devotion of the singing groups testifies, is full of endless fascination to those who participate in the singing.

Part of its strangeness comes from the fact that the tunes chosen for part-song treatment are often folk-tunes, modal in character, and therefore not particularly well adapted to orthodox harmonization. The composers, or arrangers, of the spirituals used antique materials and methods, but they were also affected

by the requirements of an alien modernity. Accordingly, they were somewhat in the position of a Tennessee ballad singer who has been brought up to sing his ballads in the traditional, unaccompanied way. But he wants to appear on the Grand Old Opry program of the WSM radio station, where singers use guitars and banjos. He can figure out some conventional chords on his guitar for songs of the "Jesse James" type, but what will he do for chords if he attempts to accompany the weird modalities of "Pretty Polly?" The latter is a task to put a fine modern musician like Hilton Rufty on his mettle. No wonder, then, that we encounter some startling harmonizations in the song-book arrangements of such great spirituals as "Alabama," "Wondrous Love," "Pisgah," and the like.

The tunes themselves, apart from the choral arrangements for which they are used, are a great treasury of folk-melody. The song-book composers were like the Franciscans of the Middle Ages who adapted the pagan carol to Christian use. In just this way the spirituals appropriate, for the business of the Lord, all kinds of worldly tunes. The melody of a spiritual may be a Scottish love-song, like "The Braes of Balquhidder," or a horn-pipe, like "The Fisher's Hornpipe," or something less clearly identifiable. In any case, worldliness constituted no objection. If the tune was musically interesting and caught the song-book maker's fancy, he used it.

What we get, then, is a body of song that, in Dr. Jackson's phrase, is "part and parcel of the ancestral folk-melodism of the English-speaking peoples." Sometimes the tunes are borrowed without change. For example, the secular tune, "Old Rosin the Beau," becomes, in "Sawyer's Exit," a Christian's death song rather than the beau's last farewell to the ladies. Sometimes we find adaptation: "Rose Tree" has strong resemblances to "My Grandmother Lives on Yonder Little Green" and to "Turkey in the Straw." These are rather obvious and simple examples. At another stage we find free composition within the established idiom.

The tunes seem closely akin to ballad melodies, but there are

numerous adaptations from very ancient melodies of other types, both secular and sacred. The sixteenth century love-song, "Western Wynde," seems to furnish the melody for "Female Convict," a religious ballad found in the shape-note books. Morris-dance tunes are common. Occasionally a Gaelic piece appears, which might have been a Highland boating song or a lullaby. There are Jacobite songs, and there are typical eighteenth century marches, of the kind popular when the fife was an important instrument. "Hark My Soul," from the book compiled by a German, William Hauser, comes from the "Orientis Partibus" of the thirteenth century. It is pure medieval. And wholly medieval, too, are many of the religious ballads and a surprising number of songs that must perchance be put down as true carols, almost miraculously preserved.

Yet the composers of the song-books were by no means simply copyists and adapters. A large number of the tunes are evidently original and must be thought of as indigenous American. The complex odes and anthems, of course, owe their being to the energetic spirit of William Billings, the Boston tanner, and his contemporaries and followers, who liked the "fuguing tunes." Some of these are patriotic as well as religious and reflect the aspirations of the early republic. Of this sort are "Ode to Science" and the various tributes to Washington. For that matter, such a fine melody as "Poor Wayfaring Stranger," though it may have demonstrable relationships with ballad tunes, has undergone such a definite Americanization that it must be classified as an original creation. The recent compositions of the Denson family of Alabama, though they contain echoes of the musical past, are also new creations and testify to the continuous vitality of the tradition.

The evident antiquity of so many melodies, as well as the archaic character of the musical treatment, may tempt the critic to raise some questions concerning the history of the white spiritual type. In his first book Dr. Jackson tells how the "shape note" style of singing was fostered in the singing schools of New England, and how, after New England began to rely upon new musical importations from nineteenth century Europe, the sing-

ing school migrated west and south. The tradition, by this account, became acclimated to the Southern uplands, and there was fostered and greatly developed. The shape-note singings, Dr. Jackson thinks, did not extend to the Southern low country—tidewater Virginia and the older parts of the Carolinas. To this putative history we must add the amendments Dr. Jackson has made in his later books, as to the rôle of New England, the influence of the Baptists, and possible English influences.

In broad outline, this historical account seems convincing. Certainly no other account, equally convincing, has yet been proposed by anyone. But it is not yet a completely circumstantial history and therefore may be regarded as conjectural in some respects. The main facts in support of Dr. Jackson's account are the demonstrated existence of the New England singing schools, the work of the composers and song-book editors who spread the mode, and the great efflorescence of the tradition in the South, or, more broadly, in the frontier of 1800-1860. Dr. Jackson also notes the important rôle of Philadelphia and eastern Pennsylvania, as a center of music and of music-publishing. This fits the pattern of American history. During the nineteenth century Pennsylvania was in closer relation to the frontier than was New England.

Nevertheless, certain tantalizing questions arise. What brought about the rise of shape-note singing in New England itself? When they changed from singing "by rote" to singing "by note," why did they adopt an archaic kind of polyphonic song, and where did it come from? Dr. Jackson has not found, or has not yet declared, the connecting link between the eighteenth century manifestations and the much more remote past toward which the music itself invites us to look.

Furthermore, Dr. Jackson may have generalized too broadly about the route traveled by the spirituals in their Southern migrations. He assumes that the Scotch-Irish and German migration down the Valley of Virginia and into the upland South was the main route of travel for the shape-note songs, and that they were the more welcome among the Southerners because the great

religious revival of the early nineteenth century, with its camp-meetings and enthusiasms, created a demand for new songs and song-books. But that was not the only route by which the western South was peopled. The direct influence of South Carolina, for example, on the lands between the Carolina border and the Mississippi, was of long standing and antedated the migration which Dr. Jackson emphasized. The country in which Dr. Jackson today finds the white spirituals most prevalent—north Alabama, north Georgia, north Mississippi—was peopled, after the Indian removals of the 1830's, very largely from the old seaboard states directly to the east.

And why were the rural and frontier Southerners so susceptible to northern influence in religious song when it is a glaring fact that in those same years of song-dissemination they were not equally friendly to other cultural influences from the North? What kind of religious songs did they use *before* they took up the shape-note books? Dr. Jackson does not answer these questions.

It would be surprising if he did, or if anybody did. We know something about the political history of the seventeenth and eighteenth century South, but are still far from knowing its cultural history. It is possible that Dr. Jackson tends to simplify what is very complex, and, having established a reasonable conjectural history, has pushed it into gaps where it may not belong. There is, for example, a difficulty in holding that the white spirituals were not practised in the Southern low country. The Negro spirituals, which derive from the white spirituals, are certainly well seated in the low country. How did they get there? It would be odd to suppose that Negro spirituals were carried back to Charleston from Alabama.

There are still other questions. If the Baptists were so influential, how does it happen that the old song-books preserve a surprising number of "Popish" lays: carols of the annunciation, songs about the twelve joys of the Virgin, moral dialogues (in authentic medieval style) between the soul and Christ, and a song about Adam and Eve which embodies some homiletical matter

that might have come direct from Chaucer's Parson. And these Catholic songs, too, stand in company with "The Romish Lady," which is anti-Catholic, and with well developed types of Protestant song.

These, however, are questions for the future. It may be found, eventually, that this American folk-song was in process of formation earlier than Dr. Jackson has indicated. There is some scattering evidence which suggests that the tendencies and patterns of our folk-culture were shaped in the century preceding the American revolution. But whether the answers are forthcoming is not a matter of the greatest importance. Dr. Jackson's labor is sufficient in itself, as it stands. He has made accessible to us a tradition so valuable that it would be absurd to quibble about minor historical facts. The existence of the white spirituals is proof of good health in the fundamental part of our society—the rural part. In contrast, our sophisticated musical tendencies, as exemplified in radio, movie, and cheap commercial song, would suggest that a very bad state of health is prevalent among the urbanized portions of our population. If we intend to be fully alive as a people, we will not permit Dr. Jackson's great collections to stand on library shelves, to be known only to a few specialists. After all, they are ours, they are the general heritage. From them we should be able to refresh our native strength, whether in the practice and development of the musical arts for public use, or for private enjoyment. If we pass them by, and neglect what is our own in favor of those boons allowed to us by Mr. Petrillo and his comrades, then we deserve the worst that Hollywood or the national planners can devise for us.

DONALD DAVIDSON

AT HEAVEN'S GATE

AT HEAVEN'S GATE: By Robert Penn Warren. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. \$2.50.

The characters in this book never see over the high walls of heaven. All are turned away from the gate. The unknowable will of God pursues great and small with the mysterious, almost vindictive, vehemence we are accustomed to attach to the pagan Fates. The locality for the action is of great importance. It is not background but a society in which those who determine the idea and the image no longer entertain belief. It may still be called a Christian society, but the spirit is gone out of it, except in that common reservoir of any society's strength, the peasantry, or what goes for a peasantry in this country. Here there is belief; but the belief and the pursuit of salvation are ignorant and misguided, as must be the case when those whose function it is to direct and preserve the complex forms of tradition are perverted. The rich and the powerful, deprived of form and spiritual purpose but possessing the energy of their natures, become monsters as this energy operates to no proper end. Like the Spartan boy they cloak the wolf as it gnaws their vitals. But this last stage of Western Puritanism, the Renaissance's last gasp, is a more sinister thing than the Spartan ordeal. Only the will is left, unsupported by faith. In a Christian state the will only has meaning as it is related to the struggle for salvation. It resists or does not resist all obstacles which bar the gates of Paradise to the pilgrim. Operating, as it does in this book, in a spiritual vacuum, it turns upon itself; consequently the senses and the matter of this world, once the occasion of the great drama of the human soul, go through a self-devouring process of exploitation and meaningless waste. The irony of the title and the basic irony of the catastrophe, almost a holocaust, depend upon just this.

There is an upper level of action moving about Bogan Murdock, a powerful and unscrupulous financier, and a lower level which involves Ashby Wyndham, son of a simple farming family,

who sins, knows he has sinned, not only knows but feels his degradation and his peril and sets out on a pilgrimage of salvation. At the crucial moment his failure precipitates the denouement by accidentally confronting the two levels of experience, that which believes and that which aimlessly uses the forms of belief. The fraud and utter inadequacy of stock-jobbing finance is exposed through the only person it has corrupted, a boy hero from the hills who has allowed his reputation to be used to sell out the people who made him. The other characters are beyond corruption. Ashby's people are exploited and reduced to squalor. Acted upon, not acting, they are free of temptation. Those who belong to financial circles cannot properly be called corrupt. They are the damned, or the betrayed who were taken at birth into a world where all had reached emptiness and dissolution.

This prevents the book from reaching tragic proportions, since the tragedy is one of a whole society. The actors in the top reaches of its hierarchy are denied the qualities necessary either to pity or fear. Bogan Murdock, the strong man of the piece, lacks sensibility as well as belief. He is all will and vanity, so that when the end comes he meets it as if nothing had happened. If he has any feeling about anything, it is his imbecile father, who years ago shot a political opponent for exposing his perfidy. The son uses his power to have a park set aside as a monument of esteem to one who belonged in the penitentiary. The meaning of this is the lack of meaning in the act, and it is symbolic of Murdock's life. He and his kind know that the forms are empty but they do lip service to them, for without this pretense their false stewardship of power would fall apart. That it functions without meaning or any good to those who should profit by it is corollary to the fact that, empty as they are, these forms still have some force as the only means which pulls the whole together. The irony of the situation is pointed up by the old father's imbecile condition. What he had done had meaning for the society of his day and therefore for him. The knowledge of his real dishonor destroyed his mind. The dreadful commentary which follows is that nothing can destroy the son.

This introduces a consideration about the limitations put upon the author by his viewpoint. The Fate which overtook the Greek protagonist, certainly in Aeschylus, overtook a protagonist who believed. In this fine book the actors flee their parents, not gods. In this flight there is hate and a sense of shame. The fathers represent some failure or betrayal of what they should be, as persons and as symbols of their place in society: Bogan Murdock, the financial and country club substitute for a genuine aristocracy; Mr. Calhoun, the father of the girl's first lover, who becomes immersed in the decay of a distinguished house; the intellectual with Greek tastes who creates for the girl a romantic parenthood to forget his actual bourgeois surroundings. And there is a labor agitator, nauseated by the betrayal of the tradition through his father's sentimental version of it. His nausea must have come from the knowledge that his father, who had fought through the Civil war, knew the truth.

The girl's flight from her father, Murdock, is not a flight but a search for the satisfaction a woman must ask of a man. She is the real heroine of the piece, and it would seem to be Mr. Warren's intention to use her and Ashby Wyndham as the two basic elements of the social situation which reflect the state of society. The girl flees the house of will and takes one lover after another. They all fail her and they fail from a fundamental lack of manhood. One has predominately will, another sex, another erudite conversation, another violence, but none can give her what she wants because of this obsession which pursues and makes him impotent. Her murder and the goaling of Ashby, the undoing of the two forces which reflect the state of social order, together properly force the end.

This analysis does not do full justice to the book, to the technical brilliance, nor to the ordering and rendering of the scenes. It has been limited to the meaning which seems to lie behind the treatment. It is neither allegory nor sociology, the usual and limited methods which are now current in handling of such material. It does not make tragedy for the reasons suggested, and the question arises whether the obsessions of the actors would

persist and not be changed by the dramatic complications. It seems a little forced that the labor agitator would return to violence after he has found something outside himself, that something which he pretends to be looking for. This makes the murder of the girl appear fortuitous in the light of the immense complexities which always intrude where life, and not an idea, is concerned.

ANDREW LYTLE

THE DISCONTENT OF OUR WINTERS

THE ANATOMY OF NONSENSE, by Yvor Winters. New Directions, Norfolk, Conn., 1943. \$3.00. 255 pp.

(1) *Mont St. Michel and Chartres* and *The Education of Henry Adams* represent the radical disintegration of a mind that had produced, in the *History of the United States during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison*, the second-greatest historical work in English. (2) In Wallace Stevens's "Sunday Morning," one of the greatest contemplative poems of the English language, we first encounter the ennui which is to obsess the later work of the poet and ultimately to wreck his talent. (3) The theory of T. S. Eliot's criticism and the influence of his poetry have grown upon our time with all the numbing energy of a bad habit, till any attempt to analyze the defects of modern poetry in the light of civilized standards is accepted merely as evidence that the critic is not of the elect. (4) according to John Crowe Ransom, poetry is an obscure form of self-indulgence, in which we proceed from a limited and unsatisfactory rational understanding of our subject to as complete a confusion as we are able to achieve.

These four patched-together sentences convey, as fairly (I hope) as single sentences can, the burden of the four essays that compose the body of Yvor Winters' latest book of criticism.

In addition to its body, the book has a head-piece, to set forth Winters' principles theoretically, and a tail-piece, whose bright feathers include an encomium of modern universities and little-known writers such as Adelaide Crapsey—"who is certainly an immortal poet."

If this is an irritable-sounding description of *The Anatomy of Nonsense*, it was not Winters' critical principles that provoked the irritation. His definition of what makes a good poem, besides being both coherent and appealing, is in general accord with the theory latent in the practice of other serious present-day critics, like Brooks and Warren; but it takes heroic patience not to want to scrap the principles when their author grimly hands down such paradoxes as that "Gather Ye Rosebuds" is a better poem than "To His Coy Mistress," Sturge Moore is a better poet than Yeats, Tate is anti-intellectual, and "Eliot suffers from the delusion that he is judging [the modern chaos] when he is merely exhibiting it. With his compelling insistence upon the rôle of reason in poetry and his attacks on critical relativism, Winters is a good person to have around at a time when the opposite views are demanding, and getting, *Lebensraum*; but are his intellect and his absolute values obliged to lead him into a kind of neo-classical isolationism? He can be as perverse as Doctor Johnson is when the Doctor discloses that one passage in Congreve surpasses anything in Shakespeare. Winters is a great amateur of geniuses: in fact there have not been so many rescued from base neglect since people were pinching themselves after a glance through *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*.

As the title is somewhat too cumbrous for convenience, perhaps we should use a short form of it, in the manner of the newspaper *Variety*. Two possibilities present themselves, and depend on the part of the book we are describing. *Anatomy* first of all defines a poem: a statement about an experience, real or imagined, in which the poet tries to understand the feelings that the experience gives rise to. Writing a poem is thus an act of moral judgment upon the feelings in question. (Ransom has condemned Winters as a "moralistic critic," meaning that he is like the

Marxists who cannot enjoy Shakespeare because Shakespeare liked kings. *Anatomy* shows that Ransom has not understood him.) To make possible the judgment, the poet first organizes the experience so as to exclude all but the relevant feeling. Here the meter helps. Bearing in mind that "the emotional content of words is generated by our experience with the conceptual content," the critic tries to decide whether or not the poet has motivated the feeling—that is, understood it.

Anatomy then applies this definition to Adams and Stevens, and compares it with the critical definitions of Eliot and Ransom. Adams' confusion and bewilderment constituted a mere "literary mannerism." Stevens' poetry has declined. (This study does not reach *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction*.) Eliot wrongly defended his chaotic form: as a poet, was describing not chaos but his understanding of the chaos. Ransom's doctrine of irrelevance, which, as in his remarks on Lady Macbeth's speech, "When Duncan is asleep . . . , insists on the irrelevance of images that are plainly relevant, tends to make poetry contemptible. (Winters does not use this essay, "Criticism as 'Pure Speculation,'" no doubt because he did not need it.)

These and other illuminating things are *Anatomy*—but, alas, *Nonsense* must have its say too. Let us consider, besides those already mentioned, two of the things it says, both concerned with the modern world. *Anatomy* thinks the present is pretty bad; *Nonsense* thinks the past in all respects worse, and the Adams-Eliot admiration for thirteenth-century unity a mere Romantic longing for Never-never Land. The Church was then the product of a small class; social conditions were frightful; war, as devastating as today. The last reads strangely just now, while Rome and Berlin are being sacked. The difference came in the democratization of war, or universal conscription, under Napoleon, at the beginning of the Industrial Era. And does Winters not know Lewis Mumford's studies of the medieval slum in *The Culture of Cities*? Briggs's *Architect in History* tells how cathedrals were built, and how the entire community used their naves. Neither Adams nor Eliot would deny material progress. Why

does *Nonsense* make no spiritual comparisons? Of course there were horrors then (Chaucer is cited as proof), but how can we say "worse"? Pain is relative to the expectations of the man feeling it. The serenity, if not gaiety in Chaucer and other medieval writers contrasts oddly with the gloom that shrouds nearly all literature since 1800—

and we others pine
And wish the long unhappy dream would end.

Then what profits it a man. . . . ? Winters thinks the Adams-Eliot view "can do nothing but paralyze human effort." The facts are otherwise: in the flame of his desire for an un-modern unity, Eliot forged his *Four Quartets*. Doubtless *Nonsense* sees little merit in that.

But Winters has his modern unifying force to oppose to the medieval Church: the American university. In it the student of literature who takes his profession seriously finds an institution where he may "quicken it and make it important." Winters resents the attacks of the *Kenyon* and *Southern Reviews* on the English Departments, and misrepresents them as having "picked a quarrel with the philologists and textual critics." (The quarrel was with the authorities who let these monopolize the teaching of English.) Though Winters mentions additional evidence that the *Reviews* would have been glad to have, he tries to show, by a suspicious-looking list, that the universities are well stocked with gifted poets and literary critics. Disregarding the question of their gifts, how many of these are employed by Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, three fairly influential universities? By Harvard, none (though some who belong in the list teach composition there, outside the English Department); by Yale, none; by Princeton, Blackmur and formerly Tate—both in the Creative Arts Program, which the English Department regards none too sympathetically. Above all other literary sins Winters deplores critical relativism; he honors the universities because they embody the belief in absolute truth. Has he not read *The Idiom of Poetry*, by Professor Pottle of Yale, which

appeared soon after the attacks in the *Reviews* and, if believed, cuts the ground from under them? This almost persuasive argument *against* trying to reach absolute truth in literary judgment is representative, I believe, of the relativism with which universities are riddled.

It must be obvious by now that *The Anatomy of Nonsense* is provocative; it is also one of the most readable books of criticism that have appeared. Winters writes often with an acid wit, and there is a dramatic interest in watching him quote Ransom's attack on him, and rebut it. He is also a wide-ranging critic. Fond of tracing modern ideas back to the ooze, he can refer easily and more or less accurately to medieval philosophy and English history, as well as to the literatures of many lands. If only he were not jealous of anyone's condemning modern times except Winters. . . .

ROBERT DANIEL

HEROES AND ELITES

THE HERO IN HISTORY: A Study in Limitation and Possibility. By Sidney Hook. The John Day Co. New York, 1943. xiv+267 pp. \$2.50.

THE MACHIAVELLIANS: Defenders of Freedom. By James Burnham. The John Day Co. New York, 1943. 270 pp. \$2.50.

In a time when leaders of nations fly half around the earth to plan the destinies of half mankind, the problem which constitutes the *pons asinorum* of democracy is thrust into a perspective of peculiar difficulty and urgency. This is the perennial problem of leadership. Is the historical process plastic to the will of these men, or is it substantially hardening to its future shape no matter how they may act? To what extent, and in what way, are their decisions effectively controlled by the plain people whose leaders they are? Professor Hook and Professor Burnham have published simultaneous and significant studies which converge from widely different directions upon these questions.

Professor Burnham's main conclusion is that democracy, i.e., effective control by the citizens of a state over the acts of their political leaders, whether representatives or despots, is impossible. His argument analyzes into three points: (1) Rational conduct is very rare in politics; therefore it is the locus and exercise of power which determines political structure and process, rather than consciously entertained goals or reasoned plans. (2) Power is always exercised through organization; organizations always develop leaders (an "elite") whose decisions govern the remainder (the "masses"). (3) The conditions of organization and the incompetence of the masses always ensure that, whatever the form of government may be nominally, it is always an oligarchy in essence.

The foregoing sorites, which is the meat of "Machiavellism", is abstracted by Burnham from the writings of Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, and Robert Michels, with added bits from Sorel and Machiavelli himself. Readers of Burnham's *Managerial Revolution* will recognize here its implicit political philosophy, for which Burnham makes exclusive claims of scientific objectivity.

By committing himself only to generalities and by exploiting a systematically equivocal terminology, Burnham has made his position too plausible for ready exposure. But take, for example, the first point in his argument, his defense of which consists of four fallacies of the garden variety. First, he begs the question. The easy way to make the reader think of politics as nothing but the struggle for power, while admitting that this does not sum up men's activities, is to plead the liberty of redefining "politics" as "the struggle for power," and then proceed to use the word with its ordinary denotation. Burnham takes the easy way (p. 50). Second, in discussing the difference between "logical" and "non-logical" conduct (pp. 171-182), he borrows from Pareto a distinction so dull that he can do nothing with it but chop out truisms, which are so ragged that they can suggest anything. Then they are formulated in such a fashion as to suggest, without proving, that nearly all conduct is "non-logical." Third, he

characterizes most ideals—e.g., humanitarianism, “freedom from want,” equality—as “myths.” His objectivity in these passages is a compound of aggressively-stated half-truths about history and *ad hominem* spleen against some of his less callous contemporaries (see pp. 25-26, 130-31, 242). And, fourth, he contradicts himself by asserting (a) that the superstitious “masses” are moved only by such “myths” (p. 26), and (b) that these “myths” are too vague and ambiguous to move anyone to any course of action (pp. 176-8).

This is only a sample, but, as samples go, a fair one. For the confusions I have pointed out—and equally numerous and fatal ones in Burnham’s other two points—are not adventitious mistakes. They appear whenever the complexity of fact disrupts the pattern of this elementary and monolithic system. For we have here a shocking over-simplification of the political problem. Professor Burnham does not make his study disagreeably difficult by any mention of the function of law in human relations or the manner in which the purposes and plans of groups may be affected by discussion. It is politics in easy lessons, written to cheer the soured reformer. Simple in recipe, it is mixed for quick swallowing—not for the taste (which is bitter) but for the delightful feeling of superiority to morality and to the “masses” which is its intended after-effect.

The possibility of democracy is connected not only with the influence of citizens upon their leaders but also with the influence of leaders upon history. Presidents and Ministers usually believe their commands decisive in averting catastrophes and realizing triumphs, and this belief inspires the popular version of history. But some philosophers have found, either in the enormously complicated stream of historical causation or in the personification of *Zeitgeist*, reason to reject this heroism as naïve. The issue is ancient, and usually involved in mysticism, but Professor Hook translates it into a concrete empirical setting.

No one with imagination can reflect upon the “thats” of history without speculating about the “ifs.” The problem of the “hero” arises when we frame contrary-to-fact conditional prop-

ositions in which the "if"-clause refers to the action of a historical person. Take as an instance the proposition: (1) "If Booth had missed Lincoln, then the reconstruction of the South would have been much less vengeful and unjust." If true, proposition (1) would entail the proposition: (2) "If Lincoln had administered the reconstruction, he could have controlled the Radicals." Is argument about these assertions, and others of identical form and equal fascination, merely fanciful, or are they in principle testable against historical fact? Hook's main argument is that they are testable and significant.

One might argue that whether Lincoln lived or died the economic and social forces released by the War would have driven on, without substantial difference, to the same conclusion. One might argue this way on the general principle that contrary-to-fact conditional propositions about history are never true unless their "if"-clauses refer to broad social and cultural drifts (as Tolstoy, Hegel, and Spencer would assert or to changes in the mode of economic life (as orthodox Marxists would assert). Hook examines this principle in detail, and it seems to me his criticism is conclusive. First, he shows that its plausibility derives from an arbitrary decision to stop asking "Why?" at the point when, in tracing the causes of a historical event, one gets back to its social conditions—as though one could not find significant individual actions among the causes of the very social conditions which, let us say, were so compelling as to render Booth's bullet utterly ineffectual. And, second, he shows, by a careful analysis of the historical writings of Trotsky and Plechanov, that orthodox Marxists cannot keep consistently to their own assumptions.

Finally, Hook distinguishes between the "eventful" man, "whose actions influenced subsequent developments along quite a different course than would have been followed if these actions had not been taken," and the "event-making" man, "whose actions are the consequences of outstanding capacities of intelligence, will, and character rather than of accidents of position" (p. 154). If proposition (1) were true, then Booth would be an eventful man; if proposition (2) were true, Lincoln would be an event-

making man. Hook advances his position that history contains event-making men into the Marxist stronghold by an illuminating sketch of the significance of Lenin for the October Revolution and subsequent European history.

In a chapter on "the Hero in a Democracy," Hook's argument cuts across Burnham's in a way that brings into sharp contrast the characters of these books. Hook explains why a democracy must always be on guard against its heroes, whether good or bad, but he does not take arguments that leaders are indispensable for proofs that they are inevitably autonomous. He is aware of the varieties and degrees of influence that are at work along the channels of democratic representation—discriminations hopelessly smudged over by Burnham's crude dichotomy of "elites" and "masses." He is not under the delusion that a writer in politics is realistic only if he remarks on every page that people are sometimes given to beating one another over the head. Thus, Hook is able to formulate the problem of self-government in terms of the extent to which, under specific conditions and by specific methods, it may be realized.

But at bottom the difference between Professor Hook and Professor Burnham resides in their philosophies of history. To Burnham, befuddled by Pareto's instinct-psychology, man's future is all contained and revealed in his past; there can be nothing new created. To Hook the events about us always point to novel possibilities. This is the humane, as well as the reasonable, perspective, in which, in the light of the "ifs," the "thats" of history appear, not as traps or bottlenecks to which man is blindly and inevitably drawn, but as values achieved, or opportunities wasted, by man himself.

MONROE C. BEARDSLEY.

NEW WORLD OBJECTIVES

REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION OF OUR TIME. By Harold J. Laski. New York: The Viking Press. 1943. Pp. 419.

THE LEGACY OF NAZISM. By Frank Munk. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1943. Pp. 288.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND NATURAL LAW. By Jacques Maritain. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1943. Pp. 119.

In making war on Germany in the first World War the democratic peoples never had any doubt about the basic structure of their own way of life. This is not the situation today. We can no longer assume that we will return to our old peacetime objectives. Democracies are on the defensive. We have aims in this war, but we cannot define the peace objectives of an industrial democracy, save that we see clearly that the basic values of life that are at stake are the values of freedom. But freedom cannot be totally defended unless we have regard for the future,—the uncharted future of abundance, security, and peace for all.

Broadly conceived, it is the common thesis of all the three authors under review that no social order is able to last if it fails to give the masses a sense of expanding horizons, in both material and spiritual goods. According to Professor Laski, the secret of the peace to come is the enlargement of effective demand, which involves the raising of living standards everywhere in the world, particularly in those regions where it is today pitifully low; this means, also, a planned economy for the many, an economy of general continuous abundance. Democracy and freedom can only flourish where the economic system expands; yet today, in the existing productive relations of society, the principles of no major nation-state, except those of the Soviet Union, permit this expansion; therefore, we are facing the alternatives, at the end of this war, of organizing expansion or organizing restriction in industry. The problem of planning for abundance rejects the classic conception of freedom of contract, the citizen's right to achieve wealth in a competitive market which is morally neutral; it denies also the historic validity of

the purpose to which the power of the state has been devoted. It would introduce the idea of moral purpose into the market itself, and call upon the individual to find a new experience of freedom in a functional activity born of that moral purpose.

Professor Laski is convinced that we must plan now, while at war, while the direct threat of external danger is upon us, before "the high mood of exaltation and sacrifice" is eroded, while we can find agreement about fundamental differences. He calls for Anglo-Soviet-American collaboration and unity, confident that there is nothing in the nature of the Soviet Union alien to a democratic state organized for planning and social security, that its true character is a "genuine search for democracy and freedom . . . new in the history of the world."

His thesis is explicit and concrete. It is an obvious assumption that "a common prosperity begets a common trust," provided it is first admitted that socialism would mean an economy of plenty, and that democratic institutions for maintaining peace are of no avail without a revolutionary change in the relations of production. Implicit in Professor Laski's thesis is the view that the present war is not so much a national as a world-wide revolutionary conflict. But the alliances between capitalist democracies and the socialist dictatorship in fact testify to the national character of the present war. Professor Laski is, however, eminently right in affirming our need for continuous expansion. He is also right in rejecting the all too simple thesis of inherent German wickedness and inherent excessive aggressiveness; he is right in holding that the economic disruption of Germany would do more harm than good. But the fact remains that the creation and maintenance of peace by the United Nations will be primarily a political than an economic problem. It is a revolutionary obsession to insist that our first need is the organization of a planned economy before the end of the war, and the utilization of Germany's capacity with tasks directly relevant to the needs of peace.

Dr. Frank Munk is far more realistic in his immediate ends. He sees little gained in regarding nazism as a middle-class revolt,

a counter-revolution, a form of reactionary conservatism. The essence of nazism is the reappearance of a new warrior-class superior to all others, one based on unbridled use of every conceivable method of force. It is therefore of primary importance to abolish the hereditary class of Germany, the aristocracy of military and civil service; it is important, too, to carry out radical agricultural reforms and to place all German key industries under an international public control. Dr. Munk fears that the sudden recapture of personal freedom will release tremendous passions and hatreds, a desire for revenge against all Germans, and that the wrath of European peoples will be turned against every individual or group known to have collaborated with nazis. With Professor Laski he believes in planning, but only as a communal responsibility to be evolved under a new leadership long after the war. The first problems of peace must be political; yet a new freedom and great expansion await industries and trades that learn how to collaborate with governments, provided governments also learn how to collaborate with business. In place of a Laski "revolution by consent," Dr. Munk sees a fruitful partnership between government and business, warning us that their leadership will be accepted only if it can revive a code of communal moral values.

Moral values and the common good of society are defined in Jacques Maritain's brief essay as a "communion in the good life." Because society is not a mere collection of private goods, which is the old disguised anarchic conception of bourgeois materialism, and because the good of society is not secured by sacrificing the parts to itself, our aim should be the communal good—the common good of multitudes of human persons. This common good is the foundation of all authority and of leadership charged with definition of goals and with social guidance. This common good demands the development of intrinsic civic virtues, an integrity of social righteousness and justice in the mass of mankind. Maritain holds that a truly Christian political society would be Christian by virtue of the very spirit that animates it, by the acknowledged dignity and rights of persons, and by the

character of moral obligation inherent in authority. And because the immediate object of the temporal community is human life with its natural activities and virtues, and not divine life and the mysteries of grace, such a political society would not require of its members a common religious creed. The aim of political society implies an association of human persons and tasks to be done in common. In the bourgeois-individualist type of society there is no common task to do, and therefore no communion in the good life. The challenge before us today is to determine what that common task is to be, embracing the good of multitudes, their betterment, their progress, thanks to which "man's attributes are to be realized and made manifest in history." Planning for expansion is, implicitly, not enough. It should be the objective of the political community "to procure the common good of the multitude, in such a manner that each concrete person . . . may truly reach that measure of independence which is proper to civilized life and which is insured alike by the economic guarantees of work and property, political rights, civil virtues, and the cultivation of the mind." This, according to Maritain, involves an organic and pluralist basis of political society, a régime no longer based on the power of money, but on human values, when the class struggles would have been overcome along with the capitalist economy itself.

EUGENE M. KAYDEN

